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AROUND THE CORNER.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

Around the corner, afar or nigh,
  What waits as we hurry blindly?
Will Sorrow leap from the sheltered wall,
  Or Fate clasp hands more kindly?

Right onward, straight for a little way,
  But a little way, it may be, going,
And then what crouches by the way,
  Face unfamiliar showing?

The pretty maid tripping up the street,
  Soft curls in the sweet air tossing,
May never guess that her second self
  She will meet at the shadowed crossing.

While he, on his schemes for a life intent,
  Dreaming not of the maiden smiling,
Lessens the angle step by step
  'Twixt him and her face beguiling.

Around the curve of the bending way,
  How the fateful feet may linger,
With message told in the lightning's way,
  Held light by a careless finger:

A tale that may blot the sunshine out,
  Or brighten some dreaded sorrow,
Divide the songs of the yester eve
  From the sighs of the coming morrow!

Around the corner are idols prone,
  Face down, like Dagon, lying
Silent and dumb, while round about
  Lie fete-day blossoms dying.

There are shuttles wound with a golden thread
  Just poised to await our throwing;
There are arrows laid on the current's breast,
  To direct our way out-going.

Ah, by and by, from a higher plane
  In the region of sunny weather,
We shall see the lines of all crossing ways,
  And know why they come together.

The Plot Against Hawley;

OR, THE

PRISONER OF DESOLATION.

By LEON LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE BOY MAGICIAN," "RED KNIFE," "THE BROKEN HOME," "EDDY'S SEARCH," "THE CLUB-FOOT BEAR," "MARK HEBER'S LUCK," ETC.

CHAPTER IX.

PEDDER MAKING HIMSELF USEFUL.

At just five minutes to five o'clock, on the following morning, Captain Pedder took possession of his front parlor, after making a very careful toilet, and posted himself behind the blinds of one of its windows, in such a way that he could see without being seen by any one approaching the house.

He had been in this position just four minutes, displaying a keen anxiety, when he saw a well-known form approaching, at a careless saunter, from the direction of Broadway—the form of Tom Breeling.

Pedder hastened to meet his ally at the door, giving him admittance before he had time to ring the bell, and so bring his visit under the notice of Kate, the solitary servant of the brother and sister.

"Come into the parlor, Tom," said Pedder, after closing the door in silence between the visitor and the street. "My sister is not up yet, and we shall not be disturbed. Your punctuality is a good indication of the success I note in your wicked eye."

Tom laughed after his strange fashion—far down in his throat—and handed out the two checks which had passed from Pedder to Mrs. Hawley the day previous.

"There are the documents you wanted," said he, taking a chair, "and it has been about the toughest job I ever undertook, to get them. Mrs. Hawley had them sewed into her corset, and that corset was under her pillow, and she as wakeful as a baby a month old can make a young mother."

Pedder looked at his confederate admiringly.

"That was a ticklish situation," he agreed. "Let's hear how you compassed the thing."

"Why, I engaged board at good Mrs. Piper's boarding-house, the room over Mrs. Hawley's being vacant. Not as Tom Breeling, of course, but as Deacon Abraham Sanborn, a pork merchant of Cincinnati. You should have seen the face I put on. The madman I played upon Hawley at Desolation wasn't a circumstance to this marvelously gotten-up pork merchant. Once in possession of my room, I watched my chance, and took an impression of the key of Mrs. Hawley's door, and procured an extra key, for fear that she might not leave her own in the lock. As to a bolt, I took notice that there wasn't any. These steps taken, I passed the evening in the parlors with the other boarders, with the exception of five minutes devoted to a thorough ransacking of Mrs. Hawley's rooms, trunks, bureaus, and so on, during her absence. The only result of that search was to convince me that the checks were upon Mrs. Hawley's person—either in her purse or her corset. The rest you can imagine. I let myself into the lady's room, not long after midnight, and as soon as her breathing assured me that she was in the land of Nod. The hour's prowl that followed was twice interrupted by Mrs. Hawley and her baby, but it was at last crowned with success, and in five minutes thereafter, Deacon Abraham Sanborn, the eminent pork merchant of Cincinnati—as represented 'for one night only' by Tom Breeling—had departed forever from the house of Mrs. Piper."

Pedder laughed outright.

"I knew I hadn't rated you too highly," he declared gayly. "What neat simplicity! You are cleverness itself!"

"To give color to the robbery of the checks, I had to pick up all the jewelry that came in my way—the lady's watch, a brooch or two, sundry ear-rings, and other trifles."

"Good! I ought to have recommended that very measure."

"There's no need of that when I am your agent," said Tom dryly, "said measure being recommended by the jewelry itself. I can keep these trifles, I suppose?"

"Of course. I shall take great pleasure—in due time—in supplying the lady with new ones in their place. Your taking the jewelry plays directly into my hands."

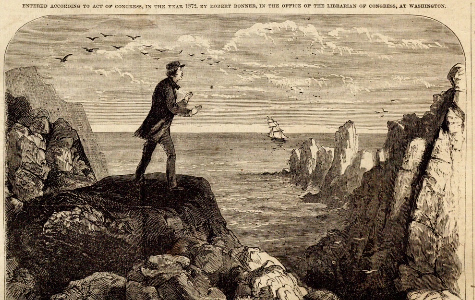
"And into my own, I think, to the tune of a hundred dollars. But what is to be done with the checks?"

"The burglar will naturally try to realize the money, I should say," replied Pedder reflectively.

"Oh, of course."

"A signature or two will have to be forged first," added Pedder. "But a man who does not scruple at burglary needn't hesitate at forgery. The checks must be ordered, therefore, and sent to the bank."

ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS, IN THE YEAR 1872, BY ROBERT BONNER, IN THE OFFICE OF THE LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS, AT WASHINGTON.



WILL. HAWLEY DISCOVERS A SHIP ENTERING THE HARBOR AT DESOLATION.

"Well, you can order them, I suppose—and with much less trouble than it cost me to steal them. I've heard that you ordered several for your late father."

Pedder frowned at the venturesome observation, but as he knew that Tom was merely stating a fact indicative of his employer's skill, the brows of the latter, momentarily corrugated, resumed their wonted smoothness.

"I can, of course, order them, as you suggest," he observed. "Mrs. Hawley is not known at the bank, but I can sign her name, and then forge the signature of Minnell & Co., in attestation of the lady's."

He seized a pen, even while speaking, and in a moment more returned the checks to Tom, duly prepared for presentation at the bank.

"By thunder! that's neatly done," the confederate of this forgery could not help exclaiming, as he glanced at the signatures, and especially at those purporting to be signed by Minnell & Co. "I've seen many a check and other papers signed by Minnell & Co., and I'd swear to that as being their signature, if I were put upon the witness stand this minute!"

Pedder smiled contentedly.

"I am glad to see my abilities in such excellent favor, Tom," he returned, as Tom carefully replaced the checks in his pocket-book. "And now I'll tell you what you are to do with the checks. You must find a boy to present them at the bank as soon as the bank is open. Such a boy can easily be had, I take it, in the circle of your acquaintances?"

"Certainly. Any street Arab will do me that service, but I must say that this is the most common and shallow of all the tricks resorted to by forgers—"

"Of course it is, and for that reason it will provoke no particular attention at the bank, or elsewhere. You will disguise yourself, therefore—to begin at the beginning—and sally forth with these two checks in quest of a boy to present them. You will watch the boy long enough to see that he enters the bank, and you will then dig out and take good care not to be found!"

"That'll be easy enough. I'll assume a disguise that will be clever. I'll dig out, therefore, and leave the street Arab to run away with the money, if he should get it—and ten to one he will, upon that signature."

"No, he won't, and for several good and sufficient reasons. I am certain to hear of the robbery in the course of two hours, and it's more than likely that my valuable services will be invoked for the recovery of the money."

"Ah! I see! It's here that you'll come in again as a useful friend of Mrs. Hawley!"

"That's it," said Pedder, with his usual quiet complacency. "As soon as the robbery is thus reported to me, I shall hasten to the bank and post the cashier. The boy sent by you will accordingly be denied payment and questioned, while the checks will be retained. But the boy will tell his story, and it appearing that he is merely the tool of the robber and forger, who met him in the street, and who is awaiting his return at such a corner, the lad will be allowed to go, and search will be made at the corner in question for his principal."

"Who won't be found, to judge by what he knows about himself," muttered Tom.

"You can see, therefore, what the whole upshot of the business will be. I will take charge of the checks, as the friend of Mrs. Hawley, and restore them to her. She will be delighted, of course, and realize what a nice friend I am, and so on."

"I see," said Tom. "It results from all this that you intend to maintain business relations with Mrs. Hawley, as a step toward establishing relations of a more intimate nature."

"That's the little game for the present; and with your aid, Tom, I am sure to be always wanted, always in demand, and consequently always upon the high road to that success I am seeking."

"One word, Captain—if I am not too bold. Is Mrs. Hawley worth all this trouble?"

The face of Captain Pedder became almost fiery in its redness. His form shook with a tremor that could have been termed violent.

"Worth the trouble?" he ejaculated hoarsely. "She is worth all else there is in the world! I'd sell my soul to Satan, were it necessary for me to do so, in order to insure my becoming her husband!"

"I can understand your earnestness upon that point," said Tom: "for she is really a gorgeous woman! But I foresee that we have work before us, and I merely wanted to know that you'll esteem your victory cheap, whatever it may cost?"

"Well, you may be easy on that score, Tom. Mrs. Hawley shall be my wife, if she costs me every dollar I possess, and every dollar I can beg, borrow, or steal."

"Well, that is what I call a rousing affection," exclaimed Tom smilingly. "But as I am tired as a dog, as well as hungry and sleepy, I will leave to our friends in Fourth street the task of enlightening you further in regard to the robbery, and hurry home at once to repose from my labors."

"All right. The sooner you are out of the house the better, as I am expecting a call. But as you take your leave, Tom, take also the assurance of my appreciation, and, what's more to the point, this hundred dollar bill!"

He handed over a crisp bank-note of the denomination stated, and Tom was naturally very profuse in his thanks, as he stowed the rich reward carefully away in his pocket-book and took his departure.

Left to himself, Pedder returned to his seat in an easy chair close to one of the windows, and lighted a cigar, which act with him was always a sign that he was in good spirits. And in less than a minute thereafter he had plunged into such a pleasant reverie that he took no note of time, and that an hour and a half glided away unheeded.

At the end of that time the door bell was rung with a decided emphasis.

"Ah! I had forgotten to watch," ejaculated Pedder, starting from his deep musings.

In another moment he was at the door, which he hastened to open.

A lady stood upon the steps with her vail thrown back—the very lady he was expecting to see at precisely that hour—Mrs. Piper!

"Good-morning, Captain Pedder," was her greeting.

Pedder struck an attitude that was doubly expressive of wonder—wonder at her presence, and wonder at the agitation betrayed by her voice and manner.

"Can it be?" he cried excitedly. "Mrs. Piper! And at such an hour! Is it possible? Walk in, Mrs. Piper—walk in."

The lady hastily complied, and Pedder closed the door, leading the way to the parlor.

"And pray tell me what has happened to send you here at such an hour of the morning," continued Pedder rapidly. "Is Mrs. Hawley—is she—oh! is she dead?"

And here the crafty Pedder struck an attitude and put on a manner which were intended to indicate to Mrs. Piper that the man before her would have no further occasion to reside on the earth, if Mrs. Hawley had indeed been removed from it.

"No, no," replied Mrs. Piper, sinking into the chair advanced for her use. "Mrs. Hawley is well—"

"Thank Heaven! thank Heaven!" interrupted Pedder, tumbling wildly upon a sofa.

Mrs. Piper looked at him wonderingly, as she said to herself:

"Why, how much he thinks of Mrs. Hawley!"

Then she resumed:

"But Mrs. Hawley is just now in great distress, sir. A thief has stolen the twenty-five hundred dollars you paid to her yesterday."

"A thief—stolen?" gasped Pedder.

"And the fault is mine, I suppose," added Mrs. Piper dejectedly. "I put a strange man into the room over Mrs. Hawley's yesterday, and as he is missing this morning, we suppose him to be the thief. Here is the card he gave me."

She handed out the *bona fide* card of a *bona fide* pork merchant of Cincinnati which Tom Breeling had picked up at a provision dealer's in West street.

"I see," said Pedder. "You have been imposed upon, Mrs. Piper. This is an honest card, and these are honest references upon it—just as you supposed. But the man who gave you the card is not Mr. Sanborn: he's some vile impostor."

"I had reached this very view of the matter," sighed the good landlady. "But I had no suspicions—and yesterday was the Fourth, so that I could not have hunted up the references in New York, even if I had thought of such a thing. And so this bogus Mr. Sanborn got up in the night and entered Mrs. Hawley's room, and took the checks out of her corset—"

Pedder leaped to his feet, uttering an ejaculation of pretended surprise, and several louder cries of simulated joy.

"Checks?" he exclaimed. "Did you say checks, Mrs. Piper?"

"I did, sir. The two checks—"

"The thief took the checks then, just as I gave them to Mrs. Hawley?"

"That's it, Captain Pedder—"

"Bravo! Glorious! The thief won't get a cent of the money!" cried Pedder, as he tumbled himself back upon the sofa.

"He won't?"

"No, he won't, for I'll go to the bank and stop payment, and take, as Mrs. Hawley's friend, whatever steps it may be necessary to take in the matter."

"And Mrs. Hawley will not lose the twenty-five hundred dollars?"

"Not a cent of it—not a cent!"

Mrs. Piper drew a long breath of relief, and the revulsion of her feelings was such that she burst into tears.

"Forgive this weakness, Captain Pedder," she soon murmured.

"Forgive you, my dear Madam? Your tears do you honor. I can hardly keep from weeping myself. The thief entered Mrs. Hawley's very sleeping room then?"

"Her very sleeping room, and took the checks from her corset, which was under her very pillow."

"He must be a bold rascal to operate in that way—so sharp, in fact, that there is little likelihood of our being able to catch him. But the money is safe, Mrs. Piper. The checks having been made payable to Mrs. Hawley's order—"

"She had not signed them, sir!"

"Then the money is just as safe as if it were in your hands at this moment."

"Oh, how glad I am to hear you say so!" murmured Mrs. Piper. "You can never know what I have suffered in the last two hours—the fault of the loss being mine, you see. And as to poor Mrs. Hawley, she was nearly distracted. In fact, she was in such a bad way that I could do no less than propose to come at once to you, Captain Pedder, and demand your aid in the matter."

"You honor me, Mrs. Piper, and place me under the greatest obligations," said Pedder, starting up and bowing gravely, with his hand upon his heart.

"Mrs. Hawley at once approved of my project of coming here, and wondered that she hadn't thought of the measure before, seeing that you paid her the checks. And now that you have taken such a great load from my mind, sir," added Mrs. Piper, arising, "I will hurry home as fast as I can, to relieve Mrs. Hawley's worry and excitement."

"Please assure her from me that she will not lose a penny," said Pedder, assuming a bristling air of business. "I should be greatly pleased, Mrs. Piper, to detain you long enough to meet my sister, who is about getting up, but under the circumstances I must deprive myself of that pleasure—not without the hope, however, of making you acquainted with my sister at an early day."

"I shall be extremely pleased to meet her—or yourself, Captain Pedder, at any time. We shall hear from you during the day, I suppose, or see you at the house?"

"Just as soon as I have news to communicate," declared Pedder, bustling about and seizing his hat and gloves. "I'm going to put the police on track of the thief instantly. By the way, was anything else taken?"

"Oh, all of Mrs. Hawley's jewelry."

"That, I'm afraid," said Pedder, with an assumed air of thoughtfulness, "will be a total loss. The thief, you see, may have sold or pawned it already. But I shall make the attempt to catch him. I am as pleased to be of service to Mrs. Hawley as you can possibly be at hearing that she is not to lose her money."

"You are goodness itself, Captain! I thank you sincerely—"

"Not a word, dear Mrs. Piper. I am the only one to render thanks in this matter, since it enables me to be of service to one esteemed lady, and to continue a most pleasing acquaintance with another."

Mrs. Piper flushed at the sentiment, and at the respectful pressure of her hand with which it was accompanied.

The next instant she had gone, in a graceful flutter of emotion, and Pedder, laying aside his hat and gloves, sauntered leisurely toward the dining-room, saying to himself:

"That good old soul will be of great service to me from this time onward. She'll sound my praises to the 'widow,' and be as good in her way as the Rev. Mr. Moody."

CHAPTER X.

A STARTLING ARRIVAL.

The day had brightened around Hawley while he was conversing with the singular madman he had encountered so strangely upon the lonely isle to which he had been consigned by the wickedness of Captain Pedder and his sister. The sun had even shown itself repeatedly through the cloudy sky—a sight not often seen at Desolation. But Hawley's cheerfulness lay entirely upon the surface, and his thoughts were full of bitterness and gloom.

"Here I am," he said to himself, "the 'Lord High Admiral' of one maniac, and in a fair way to be murdered by another! Imprisoned upon an island which has never been voluntarily inhabited since the morning of creation! Heaven alone knows when I shall be able to vacate this 'high post.' And my poor wife—"

The thought of his wife was too painful for his mind to dwell upon.

"Your majesty's cabin is not far away?" he asked abruptly.

"No, Admiral—not a quarter of a mile."

"I long to see it. Do you like it better than Longwood?"

"I don't know as I do, although Longwood was nothing but a stable. I haven't been looking for Longwood, however, with any intention of occupying my wretched apartments there again. My motive in looking for Longwood, as mentioned, was one of wonder and curiosity. I wish to know where Longwood went to so suddenly on that fatal morning, two summers and two winters ago, when I found Sir Hudson Lowe and his minions dead, Jamestown swallowed up, and St. Helena shaken up into an island about fifty times its natural size."

"A natural wish, sire. My first duty, as prime minister, will be to assist your majesty in these researches. Affairs at St. Helena are in a great muddle."

"O dear, yes! I shall certainly go crazy if things go on much longer as they have been going!"

A brief silence succeeded these remarks, but the mind of Hawley continued busy.

"It's clear," he assured himself, "that this man did not commit that villainous assault upon me yesterday. But the mystery as to who did assault me is greater than ever. It must be that there is a third person on the island, and that this third person is a madman. But who is this poor fellow, and who is my assailant of yesterday? Is this man Jude Breeling, or is the man who assaulted me yesterday Jude Breeling?"

Will. inclined to the former theory. The mention of dates by his 'sovereign' pointed clearly to that supposition. And the mania of 'his majesty' was quite in harmony with the theory of his being Jude Breeling.

"On getting up some morning, about two years ago," mused Hawley, "the poor fellow's mental illness had advanced to such a stage that he was completely befogged as to his own identity, situation and surroundings. The island, therefore, became St. Helena, and he himself Napoleon, deserted by his followers. But who on earth can be that other madman?"

Will. knotted his brows vainly over this problem. No solution was possible.

"Well, well," was his mental conclusion, "I must guard myself against another assault from the one manaic, while I learn all I can from the other."

He had now reached the elevation which had previously intervened between him and the sea, and from this point the whole of Christmas Harbor was visible, as was the greater portion of its shores.

"I see," he ejaculated. "The head of the harbor is immediately ahead of us, and not a hundred rods from us. This 'large pool of fresh water' to the left is the one mentioned by Captain Cook. The sandy beach immediately in front of us is the one upon which Captain Cook landed. And now, as then, it is covered by ten thousand gulls, ducks, penguins, albatrosses and other marine birds."

"And yonder is my cabin," said the madman, pointing to a hut upon a little knoll of the ridge below them that was nearest to the sea.

He led the way down the slope rapidly, and the couple were soon at the hut in question.

It was too far to the south and too sheltered to be visible from the spot where Captain Pedder had filled his water casks, which, as will be remembered, was upon the north shore of the harbor. Its site had evidently been selected under such considerations as convenience, fresh water, protection from the wind, and others which would naturally occur to any one forced to remain for any length of time upon the island.

"Why, what a strange little hut!" exclaimed our hero. "It is built of the pieces of a wreck! The roof is quite a large piece of a deck!"

He at once became greatly interested, and began looking around.

The name of Jude Breeling and a date were cut over the little door-way.

"Ah! this hut was built by Jude Breeling," continued Will. "His brig was dashed in pieces near Arched Point. He saved many things from the wreck, it seems—at least many of the broken timbers. But Arched Point is more than two miles away. He must have floated all these timbers to the head of the harbor. Oh, I see—he couldn't have existed during the winter upon that exposed point where the vessel was wrecked. He was obliged to come up here for shelter. And he came here because here is a little stream of water that assisted him in bringing his timbers ashore. In fact, he floated them at high tide nearly to the spot where we are standing. I see—I see."

"Come in, Admiral," said the madman. "Your quarters here are not quite equal to those you shall have by and by at the Tuileries, but they are comfortable. There's a bed at one side of the room, and a sort of lounge at the other. You may take your choice by night, and as to the occupancy of the hut by day we shall not quarrel."

Will. entered the hut, and began a curious survey of the structure and of its contents. He was no less astonished to see how well the hut was built, than he was to note the great variety of objects accumulated within it. These objects had all evidently been saved from the wreck of the brig in which Jude Breeling had come from Australia to the island, in quest of the pirate's buried million.

"Why, your majesty must have been very comfortable here!" ejaculated Will., sinking upon the lounge to which the madman had drawn his attention.

"Except in the winter, Admiral—except in the winter! The winters in St. Helena are terrible, since the great changes and convulsions."

"But you have lots of seal skins with which to keep yourself warm, I notice."

"O dear, yes! There are plenty of seals, and as their skins are the only thing obtainable in the way of clothing, I take care to have plenty of them. I found plenty of them here, in fact, on my arrival."

"And those dishes and tins, which I see in the little cupboard behind you—did you find those here?"

"Certainly. I found everything here, just as you see it."

"Including those books upon the shelf?"

"Certainly."

"And that ship's log upon the table, as well as the pens and ink beside it?"

"Oh, of course."

"Well, you must have been surprised, sire, to find such a house here!"

"Not at all."

"Indeed! You have some idea then as to who built the house?"

"Yes, I have."

"And who built it, pray?"

Will. asked the question breathlessly.

"You could not guess in a thousand years who built it," said the madman gravely.

"In that case, I may as well beg your majesty at once to tell me the secret."

"Well, then, it was built by Jupiter!"

Will. repressed his disappointment.

"Indeed!" he said. "By the original—by the great Jupiter?"

"It was—by the immortal Jupiter himself, in his own proper person! And what is more wonderful, it was built in a single night!"

"Is it possible?"

"And not only was it built in a single night," added the madman, "but it was built for me the very night my wretched followers deserted me. Yes, it was built for my especial use and occupation, because Jupiter took pity on me, and because he wished to give the runaways a hint that I am still 'a man of destiny' and a favorite of fortune."

"And you have accordingly lived here for two years past—that is to say, two summers and two winters?"

The madman gravely assented.

"And in this time your majesty has never met the madman?"

"No—never!"

"You have no idea as to who he really is, sire?"

"Not the least. But I think he may be the Jude Breeling who wrote the cock-and-bull story you have in your pocket."

"In case he is Breeling, sire, he is simply a sailor—a deserter from the United States ship of war *Ticonderoga*. But your majesty knows nothing of any such man, or any such ship?"

"Except what the madman has said in the aforesaid document."

"It seems strange that your majesty has never caught a glimpse of him."

"It does indeed, seeing that he once occupied this very hut—seeing that he seems to have slipped out of it, in fact, about the time that I slipped in."

The conviction that the man before him was Jude Breeling became still stronger in Hawley's breast.

"How can I settle the question?" he asked himself.

He reflected earnestly, and at length a gleam of inspiration flashed from his eyes.

He turned to his companion.

"If you will permit me to be perfectly frank, sire," he observed, "I will submit an opinion about this matter."

"Speak out, my dear Admiral—speak out at once. It is to that very aim and intent that you are filling your high office."

"It is my opinion, sire, that the madman means us mischief. He may not be mad at all. He may be a secret emissary of Austria or Prussia. The fact that he keeps hiding himself all the time is very suspicious as well as strange."

"I agree with you, Admiral. I've often been uneasy about the rascal."

"Then I will hasten to propose to your majesty a suitable measure against this unknown intruder, let him be whom he may. We had better expel him from our dominions."

"But how expel him, my dear Admiral, if he keeps out of our sight?"

"We can at least issue a decree of expulsion, and post it up where he will be sure to see it, if he is still prowling near us."

"All right. We'll give the rogue notice to quit. You draw up the decree of expulsion, in regular form, and I will sign it."

Will. tore a leaf from a private note-book he carried, and proceeded to draw up the decree, not without some nervousness, for he was afraid the madman might refuse to follow his lead, or might change his mind in regard to the points he had conceded already.

In two minutes the proposed decree was ready, and Will. hastened to read it to his 'sovereign,' who was immensely delighted with it. It read as follows:

"Napoleon, by the grace of God and the national will, Emperor of the French,

"To all present and all to come, greeting:

"We have decreed and decree as follows:

"ARTICLE FIRST.—The madman who has been hanging around St. Helena for several years past, is hereby ordered to leave the island within forty-eight hours.

"ARTICLE SECOND.—Our Minister of State is charged with the execution of the present decree.

"Done at St. Helena, the 27th of November, 1852."

"There, all you have to do, sire, is to affix your august signature," observed Hawley.

"Exactly; and here it is."

The madman took the pen from Hawley's hand, and wrote at the foot of the decree, in a large and legible hand:

"NAPOLEON."

Hawley turned pale, as he saw that the madman's chirography, as far as exhibited by this specimen, seemed identical with the chirography of the strange revelation of Jude Breeling.

"There's only one or two things more, sire," he hastened to say. "The first is for me to sign the decree."

He accordingly wrote:

"For the Emperor:
"The Minister of State, HAWLEY."

"That's it! that's it!" cried the madman delightedly, looking over Hawley's shoulder. "We'll clean the rascal out, or at least bring him to explanations."

"There's just one point more, sire," said Hawley nervously, as he folded the paper. "You had better address the decree yourself."

"How address it?"

"Why, just write on the outside, 'To Mr. Jude Breeling,' so that he may know that he is really meant, for I am morally certain that he is no other than the said Breeling."

"At any rate, we'll give him a shot," said the madman, seizing the pen again. "Here goes for him."

He hastened to write the necessary address, and handed the decree to Hawley.

The latter's paleness increased, as his eyes rested upon the address thus written.

"Repose here, sire, while I publish the decree," he said hastily. "I will be back in a few moments."

He slipped from the hut, with the decree in his hand, and hastened up the hill-side, intent upon nothing save the object between the madman and himself. A suitable spot was soon found, and Will. drew the strange revelation of Jude Breeling from his pocket, opened it, and placed its first page in comparison with the address the madman had just written.

The truth came out like a flash of lightning!

The name Jude Breeling was written exactly upon the decree as in the revelation!

"They are the same," muttered Will. excitedly. "They are identical!"

The madman, then, was really and undeniably Jude Breeling!

Jude had gone mad, as he had foreseen that he should. So mad that he had repudiated himself, his past, everything, even to his name. But his handwriting, unchanged by his madness, had betrayed him!

"This madman, then, is Jude Breeling," added Will. "And this is the man who holds in his wrecked brain the secret of Uncle Tommy's buried million!"

Even as he finished these words, happening to raise his eyes and look seaward, he uttered a cry of astonishment that awoke the echoes of the hills far around him.

"O God!" burst from him, and he continued to stare toward the harbor as if turned to stone.

And well he might!

For there, in plain sight, not two miles away, and midway between Cape Francais and Arched Point, a stately ship, under all sail, was standing into the harbor!

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE WRONG ONE.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

"I wonder if they'll be glad to see me?" said Ernestine Nileson, with a half-apprehensive throbbing at her heart, and a deepening of the rose-red spots on her cheek.

It was Ernestine's first visit to the thriving western city of Chicadown, where her Uncle Theodore lived—the first blossoming out of her girl life—and very proud she felt, in her blue merino dress, trimmed and faced with the loveliest shade of blue, like a baby's eyes, and her black hat with a blue plume drooping over the side. And then she thought, with a happy thrill of pride, of the neat little party dress of white muslin, whose fluted ruffles and tucks and puffs were folded away so nicely in her trunk; of the pink sash, and the wreath of roses that were so like real buds and blossoms, and the lace-edged pocket handkerchief and the white kid gloves that Uncle Jerome had given her.

"I do so hope some one will invite me to a party," said Tiny to herself, her foot involuntarily beating the measure of a polka redowa on the dusty car floor.

"Some one" might very easily have invited a worse looking damsel to a party than Tiny Nileson. She was seventeen, rather tall, with golden-brown hair brushed away from her blue-veined temples, great violet-gray eyes, and dewy scarlet lips, and no artist or sculptor could have improved on the exquisite grace of her slender little hand and long white throat.

But before her foot had beaten the last measure of the polka redowa, the cars swept into a huge dimly lighted depot, with a dome-shaped top; there was a rush among the passengers—a bustle, and a Babel of voices—and Tiny, borne onward by the resistless current, found herself standing on the platform, with varying color and agitated glances turning from one face in the chaotic mass to another. Oh, why did not Uncle Theodore come? In the wildest glens of Beechvale, Tiny had never felt half so lonely as at this minute, with the great human tide ebbing and flowing around her.

As she stood there, a stout, bald-headed gentleman with glistening gold eye-glasses rushed up to her trunk, and began scrutinizing the card, inscribed with the single word "Nileson," that her honest old father had tacked neatly on. She stepped instinctively forward.

"That trunk is mine, sir!"

The bald-headed gentleman straightened up as instantaneously as if his spine had been worked by a spring.

"Is it possible? Do I then address—"

Tiny colored violently.

"My name is Nileson."

"Nileson—Nilsson; yes, yes, exactly so. *Delighted*, I am sure; nay, I may even say charmed—honored—*o*-verpowered! Driver, here!" to a pompous-faced colored individual in black, with gilt buttons and a gold hat-band; "take this trunk. Miss Nilsson," with another springy bow, "will you honor me by accepting my arm? My carriage has waited the—the dawning of your star on the—ahem—the orbit of—of—Chicadown—for an hour."

Tiny smiled, much relieved. This, then, was her Uncle Theodore. A little eccentric, to be sure; but Uncle Jenner, the clergyman at Beachvale, had told her she must not expect to find all the world just alike.

"I was so afraid you would not meet me," she said.

"Nobody supposed you would be in until the 8.30 express," said the bald-headed gentleman, deferentially handing Tiny into a satin-lined *coupé*. "I chanced it—and I am more than rewarded. Allow me, Miss Nilsson, to carry that shawl. My wife will be charmed. And our guests too, for I have ventured to invite a few select friends to greet your advent. My position as Mayor of Chicadown—"

Tiny looked up in surprise.

"I did not know you were the Mayor of the city," she said innocently.

The Mayor bowed again so low that his spectacles had very nearly dropped off into Tiny's lap.

"I have that honor, Miss—I would say, Mademoiselle—"

"I wish you would say neither," pleaded Tiny. "Call me Tiny."

"I couldn't think of such familiarity," protested the Mayor of Chicadown.

"But it is what I am always accustomed to," urged Tiny. "Please *do!*"

"You are too good," said the Mayor. "But here we are."

The carriage had stopped before a tall brown-stone house; the nimble coachman, skipping down from his lofty elevation, threw open the coupé door, and Ernestine found herself entering a stately portal all a-glitter with gas and wreathed with flowers, through which could be read, in scarlet camellias, the word "Welcome!"

A portly lady in black velvet rustled forward, the gold chains, lockets and bracelets wherewith she had adorned herself making a jingling sound as she moved.

"My wife," said the bald-headed gentleman, with an introductory motion of his hand. "Mrs. Mayoress, allow me to present—ahem—our distinguished guest."

The Mayoress executed a sweeping courtesy.

"This is a pleasure," she murmured, "that I have long anticipated. Pray walk in. Fanchon, show the lady to her *boudoir*. May I venture to hope that you will soon favor our little social gathering," with a gracious inclination of her head parlor-ward, "with your welcome and agreeable presence? My husband will await your pleasure."

"How kind they all are!" said Tiny to herself, as she was led away by a jaunty French maid to an elegant apartment, all blue satin draperies, moquette and gilding, where a full-length mirror flashed back all the splendors of the room, "And how beautiful all this is! Oh, I didn't know Uncle Theodore was so rich!"

As she donned her white muslin party dress, and adjusted the wreath of roses, by Fanchon's help, and tied the bow of blue ribbon at her throat, she could not help being conscious that a crowd of curious feminine gazers were peeping furtively in at the door, exchanging whispers.

"I suppose it is because I am a stranger," she thought.

Five minutes afterward, a gentle "ahem" announced the waiting presence of the Mayor of Chicadown; and Tiny, seeing that it was expected of her, stepped forward and took his arm. The Mayor drew himself erect.

"This is a proud moment," he said loftily—"a happy moment! I bid the Nightingale of the North welcome—a thousand times welcome!"

Tiny looked up in surprise. She had been called "Birdie" many a time, but never "Nightingale;" but perhaps her uncle, as he was evidently a very peculiar man, had a peculiar taste in pet names.

"You will favor us with a song?" the Mayor asked. "One warble—only one—to lift our souls up, as it were, on the wings of sound."

"Oh, I couldn't sing!" faltered Tiny, growing red and white. "I—I—never sang before company—oh, please excuse me!"

The Mayor smiled benevolently:

"An excellent joke—ha, ha, ha! Capital, upon my word! Never sang before company—ha, ha, ha! My wife will be pleased with that."

As he led the young stranger into the thronged suit of rooms, a hush fell on every lip. People stared, and whispered:

"How young she looks!"

"Seven and twenty! She's not a day over seventeen."

"Dressed so plainly too."

"No doubt it is the way in her native country."

"Didn't you suppose she was taller?"

"Hush-sh-sh! She's going to sing."

For, spite of her piteous entreaties, the Mayor of Chicadown had insisted on placing her at the piano; and poor Ernestine, who had never compassed any more elaborate performance than "Blue Juniata" and "Old Dog Tray," sat fluttering and trembling before the keys. The Mayoress smiled admiringly.

"Nay," she urged, "this reluctance, however charming, is surely unsuited to one who has entranced listening millions. Mademoiselle Christine Nilsson—"

Tiny whirled round on her stool.

"O, have you ever heard Miss Nilsson? How I should like to see her! Is she coming to Chicadown this winter?"

The Mayor stared at the Mayoress. The Mayoress looked round at her guests.

"What a very keen sense of humor!" cried the stout gentleman, recovering himself with an effort. "As if we were not all aware that you yourself are Christine Nilsson."

"But indeed I am not!" cried Tiny, starting up in great agitation, the color coming and going in her cheeks like the pink and white stripes in the American flag. "There is some strange mistake here. I am Ernestine Nileson of Beechville, and I never saw Mademoiselle Nilsson in my life. And," as a sudden revelation flashed across her mind, "aren't *you* my uncle, Theodore Jonesbury?"

"No, I'm not," said the Mayor of Chicadown; "I am John Josephus Noble. But I have the pleasure of a slight acquaintance with Mr. Jonesbury, a very worthy wholesale grocer, who, I believe, resides in Superior street, over the store. And you are his niece, eh?" The Mayor made a feint of swallowing something in his throat—perhaps it was his mortification. "Quite an awkward mistake—quite, upon my word. My dear," to the Mayoress, "we must send this—ahem—this young person home in the carriage; her relatives will doubtless be alarmed. Miss Nilsson *must* have come in the 8.30 express, and that scheming villain Leonidas De Smythe will get her for *his* party, after all!"

And the Mayor of Chicadown, unable longer to conceal his waxing discomfiture, rushed frantically out of the room, leaving his wife to issue all necessary directions. But make what speed he would, he could not entirely escape the sound of stifled laughter among his guests.

Ernestine Nileson—not Nilsson—went home in the satin-lined *coupé* to the honest grocer's in Superior street, where they were all very much dismayed at her non-appearance. And the welcome she received there, although not quite so stylish, was quite as heartfelt as that rendered her in the Mayor's residence.

She told her story, and joined merrily in the laugh.

"At least I have had an adventure," said she.

And nobody could deny it.

AUNT JANE'S MONEY.

BY ANNA SHEILDS.

Aunt Jane was angry; in fact, Aunt Jane was very angry. There was a peculiar emphasis in the motion of the crotchet needle she was punching into the holes of a piece of worsted work, and a jerk in the rocking of her chair, that spoke volumes to those acquainted with Aunt Jane's peculiarities of temper. It was early in the forenoon, and generally the estimable maiden lady was bustling about her handsome house at this hour, and making the servants' lives a burden for the day. But on this particular morning they washed dishes and swept rooms in peace, while their mistress hooked up her worsted work with vicious energy.

Candor compels me to confess that my heroine—for this maiden lady of sixty is my heroine—did not possess a temper of angelic sweetness; in fact, domestics and tradespeople were apt to jump about with unusual vigor and promptness when her black eyes snapped at them. Upon the morning I have already mentioned, the spasms of anger grew more violent and frequent, 'till finally the worsted work was made into a ball, tossed to a corner of the room, and Aunt Jane burst into a fit of passionate weeping.

She was still sobbing, and rocking herself to and fro, when the door opened, and a pale, rather sickly looking little blonde came into the room. Looking at Miss Jane Montgomery for a moment, with a lip curled contemptuously, she suddenly drew over her face, like a mask, an expression of tender sympathy, and rushing across the room, knelt beside the weeping lady.

"Dear Miss Jane," she said anxiously, "what can be the matter?"

Aunt Jane—everybody called Miss Montgomery Aunt Jane—sat erect with a start, her eyes snapping fury, and her voice sharp, though trembling.

"Tom's gone!"

"Gone!" said the sickly looking blonde, turning a paler shade of yellow, for even agitation could not whiten that complexion.

"Yes, he's gone! We had a fearful quarrel, and"—here Aunt Jane gasped hysterically—"he would have his own way; so I told him to go, and never see my face again."

"Would have his own way!" echoed the little blonde, whose name was Julia Waters.

"Yes, he will marry Mary Hill, and he won't marry you! I've done with him. He has five thousand dollars his mother left him; let him try living on that, and see how he likes it, after living here for twenty years. Twenty years!" and Miss Jane's sobs broke out again. "To think of that boy's flying in my face in that way, after being like my own son for twenty years!"

"He is a wicked, ungrateful man!" said Miss Julia energetically.

"He is nothing of the kind," snapped Aunt Jane. "Nobody could be more grateful and attentive than he has been, since he was a brat of a boy."

Julia was somewhat startled, but said:

"To marry against your wish is ungrateful."

"Why shouldn't he marry the girl he loves?" cried the inconsistent spinster. "I'm an old fool. I've sent him away, and I'll never see him again."

It seemed as if Aunt Jane was right in her conclusion. The stately house echoed no more the ringing voice and light step of Tom, the nephew and darling of his maiden aunt—Tom, whose ears she had boxed since he was left, at five years old, a lonely orphan—Tom, the only child of her idolized brother—Tom, the generous, impulsive, kind-hearted boy, the handsome, reckless, noble-hearted man, who had been the comfort of her loneliness for so many years.

If Aunt Jane had been alone, Tom would doubtless have been hunted up and recalled; but Julia kept the anger alive. She was flatterer in chief, self-elected, in Aunt Jane's court, and she made her cooing voice and soft step almost a necessity in Tom's absence. Miss Jane was very rich, and had no relative but Tom. If she could be persuaded to make a will, who knew but *friends* might have legacies. Miss Julia fanned the flame of wrath, not openly, but in covert, sly remarks, that kept the sore rankling. She had learned caution from Aunt Jane's first outbreak, and knew that, driven too far, the old lady would recall her nephew, in sheer opposition to advice; so she only sighed and pitied, and made little pin scratches over the tender topic, till Aunt Jane actually began to think Tom had loved only her money, and was driven away by her threat of disinheritance entirely. She never heard of several letters, in Tom's handwriting, that were taken at the door, and burned privately by Julia's hand. She did not guess how Tom wondered over her obdurate silence, and she fretted and worried, and grew grayer and more wrinkled; while her cross, snapping temper subsided into fretful whines and irritated remonstrances at all the world. Two years told upon face and figure, and from a dark-haired, vixenish old maid, Aunt Jane altered to a white-haired, whining old woman. One of her friends, remarking thoughtlessly upon this change of appearance, said:

"You have changed so much I scarcely knew you."

A luminous idea struck Aunt Jane.

Tom Montgomery, in these two years, had settled down into a pretty, comfortable house, made home by a gentle wife and a crowing baby. He had invested his little fortune in a partnership in a dry goods house, and was making money.

To his house, one cold December evening, came an old woman, dressed shabbily, and asked for the proprietor thereof.

"Not at home," the servant said.

"I will wait, if he will come in soon."

A sweet-faced lady opened the door of a cheery sitting-room.

"Will you walk in here, and wait? Mr. Montgomery will soon be in."

The old lady came in feebly.

"You are tired," Mrs. Montgomery said kindly. "Sit here by the fire. It is very cold."

"Very cold. Is that your baby?"

The mother turned down a little the snowy sheets of a pretty cradle, and showed the dimpled cheeks of the sleeping child.

"Yes, this is my little girl."

"What is her name?"

"Jane. We call her Janey."

"Jane is an awfully ugly name."

"It is not very pretty, but she is named for an aunt of Mr. Montgomery's, of whom he is very fond," and the lady sighed.

"Thinks she'll leave her her money," thought the old lady, but she did not speak, for a door opened in the hall and a firm step crossed to the sitting-room.

Rosy, pouting cold and beaming was Tom as he came in, kissed his wife, chucked the baby under the chin, and skinned off his overcoat before he saw the old lady.

She thought she was altered by trouble and age, by her poor dress and deep bonnet, but Tom gave one stride to her, and caught her in his strong arms.

"Aunt Jane! Aunt Jane!" he fairly shouted. "Mary, this is Aunt Jane."

They had her bonnet and shawl off; they had her in an easy chair by the fire, and had sent for supper, before she could gasp out:

"Tom, I've lost all my money."

"You don't say so!"

"Every cent. Will you turn me out as I turned you out, two years ago?"

"Muchly!" was Tom's mysterious reply. "Mary, is there a fire in the spare room?"

"I think the back attic is good enough for a penniless old maid," said Aunt Jane.

"Did you put me in the back attic, Aunt Jane, when my parents left me alone in the world?"

"Humph!"

"If you will light the gas, Tom," said Mrs. Montgomery, "I will put fresh sheets and towels in the spare room."

Tom rushed up stairs whistling Dixie, and Mary, with an apology, went after him. Then Aunt Jane did the meanest of all mean things: she crept softly after them, and finding they were in the back second-story room, with the door open, she crouched down on the stairs and listened. Tom was making the fire, and Mary, moving in her quiet, swift way, was putting clean linen on the bed.

"An't it jolly?" Tom said enthusiastically.

"Making a fire?" Mary asked saucily.

"No. I say, darling," sitting down on the floor, as the idea struck him. "I never asked you if you would like to have Aunt Jane here."

"Don't be a goose, Tom!"

"But seriously now, will it bother you? I suppose I could get her a room in some stunning tiptop boarding-house, more like her own old home than our bird-cage, but—"

"Well—" Mary said, intensely grave.

"It would be so lonesome. She has a quick temper, I know; but she is so kind, and she does love me. Think how nice it was for her to come to me when she lost her money."

"Poor thing!" said Mary; "I wonder if she is very poor."

"She won't know it while we have a home or a cent, will she, Mollie?"

"Of course not, Tom; and if you ever dare to talk about a boarding-house again, I'll stop your allowance of mince-pies."

"Mary, you are an angel!" cried Tom, springing up. "My fire is out again! I'm awfully glad we called the baby Jane, Mollie."

"Tom Montgomery, make that fire!" said Mary severely, "or your aunt won't get to bed to-night."

Tom obeyed meekly and patiently, and Mary worked faithfully.

"I am sorry it is not finer, Tom," she said, "for I know her own rooms must have been very handsome. I'll put the pincushion sister Lou made for baby, here. It was so pretty I never used it. And I'll get my own rocking chair; it is the easiest one in the house; and I'll hang the photograph of baby over the mantel-piece; it will make it look home-like. To-morrow I'll get some hanging baskets and a pretty work-stand."

"That's a dear girl. Make her feel at home, Mollie. She won't care so much about her fine house, if we make her feel at home here. If you could let her putter round the house a little, and feel herself of importance, Mollie, it would delight her."

"She can boss the whole machinery! But, Tom, I had no idea she was so old."

"Nor I," said Tom ruefully. "I wonder if fretting turned her hair so white."

"Tom! Tom!"

This voice was at the door, and Aunt Jane stood there, with tears running down her cheeks.

"I am a miserable old woman, Tom!"

"Why, Auntie," said Tom cheerily, "don't cry. Come in and see how cozy Mollie has made your room. She is a jewel, Auntie," he said, aside.

"I know it, Tom. I've been sorry a thousand times I would not see her. But you should have come back to me," she said reproachfully, "and not have minded angry words."

"But I wrote and wrote, and you never answered."

"Wrote to me?"

"Of course."

"I never saw the letters. That viper Julia must have destroyed them."

"Where is Julia?"

"Gone home. The day that I told her I had lost my money she packed up and left me. Tom, I don't deserve it, after doubting you; but will you forgive me for testing your love?"

"Testing my love!"

"Yes, my dear boy. I meant to talk to your wife and you as somebody else, but you knew me too soon. But, Tom, that was all fudge."

"What was all fudge?"

"About the money."

"Oh," said Tom dryly. "You haven't lost any?"

"Not a cent. Now, Tom, don't set your face that way. Come back to your old home, and bring your darling wife and baby. Do, Tom!"

"Aunt Jane," said Tom solemnly, "I'll come home on one condition."

"What is that?"

"That you here solemnly promise me never to leave me one cent of your money."

"I won't leave you anything but a lock of my hair."

She kept her word. For ten years the family lived happily together. Then they carried Aunt Jane to her last resting place, and her will being opened, her money was found to be equally divided among Tom's children.

WIT AND HUMOR.

A GERMAN poet has written a touching poem, in which the hero, while sleeping in the shade of a palm-tree, on the tropical shore of Lake Erie, in the United States of North America, is devoured by an alligator, while his sweetheart is seeking to restore her health by sojourning "amid the icy regions of far-off Florida, whose hyperborean blasts bring to her pained ears the last agonizing cry of her perishing lover." It is too bad, especially the geography.

A BEGGAR asked for a bit of bread and butter at a house the other day, and on a couple of slices being brought to him, he indignantly refused it. "What's the matter?" asked the donor; "isn't this good bread?" "Yes, the bread's good enough," said the beggar. "Well, isn't the butter good too?" "Yes, I've no fault to find with the butter." "Well, then, what *is* the matter?" "I don't like the way it's spread," growled the fastidious mendicant.

A BROOKLYN lady remarks that the mortality among the members of the Masonic fraternity must be very great this year, as every time she asks for a little recreation, her husband regrets that he can't comply with her request, as he has to attend a brother Mason's funeral.

"WHAT'S the price of this little nosegay?" said a handsome young lady to a florist. "Seventy-five cents," was the reply. "Will it keep well?" asked the young lady. "Yes," said the florist. "Then I guess I'll let you keep it," said the damsel, as she walked out of the shop.

A MAN who returned home after an absence of six years, found the baby that he left only twenty months old grown into a pert Miss of nearly eight years, who, when he happened to offend her one day, petulantly exclaimed, "I wish you had never married into our family!"

"AT the close of a violent thunder-storm," writes a Milwaukee reporter, "a suit of clothes was found at the foot of an oak-tree in the suburbs, from which the recent occupant seemed to have been percussively eliminated by a flash of lightning."

"IF you don't want the soot, don't go up the chimney," was the reply of a Macon, Ga., editor to "respectable" parties who requested him not to mention the fact that they had been arraigned in the Police Courts.

A HUSBAND of six months' experience gives it as his opinion that wedding-rings should be rechristened suffer-rings. His wife says that she came to the same conclusion before she had been married two months.

AN unspeakable wretch, a domestic monster, after attending his wife's funeral, remarked, "All my pleasure was destroyed by having to ride in the same carriage with my mother-in-law."

A NASHVILLE paper says there was never before such a prodigious crop of *pairs* in that city as there has been this season. Nearly every front gate is loaded down with them on pleasant evenings.

A POLICE JUSTICE settled a case, the other morning, in which a rowdy had committed an assault with a revolver, by committing the rowdy and ordering the pistol to be discharged.

THE ladies give as a sufficient reason for their marrying for money so often, the fact that a woman so often finds nothing else in a man worth marrying him for.

IT is proposed, in Indiana, to change the marriage service so it will read, "Who *dare* take this woman?" And the groom shall answer, "I dare."

AN irritable man, who was disappointed in his boots, threatened to eat up the shoemaker, but finally compromised by drinking a cobbler.

"WHAT is the best butter?" exclaimed an orator, at a meeting of dairymen. "An old ram!" responded a sheep-raising interloper.

DOCTOR—"Your cough is a great deal worse this morning." *Patient*—"That's odd, as I've been practicing all night."

THE air to hum on passing a laundry where the girls are at work—"Wring out, wild belles!"

OF all parts of arithmetical studies the ladies of our seminaries object most to aver-age.

CAN a lamp be said to be in a bad temper when it is put out?

A MOTHER'S heart gives 4th joy at her baby's 1st 2th.

THE first game of life—Bawl.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A SAD accident occurred in Fairfield, Me., on Monday of last week. Fred. Gifford of that place started toward night from the haying field for home, with a mower, with which he had been at work all day. He was soon afterward found in the road dead, lying partly upon the machine, with his clothes badly torn and body bruised. It is supposed that he got caught in the gearing, and was drawn in front of the machine and killed.

BATHERS should be careful not to dive in shallow water, as dangerous consequences sometimes result from striking the bottom. A man in England recently, at one of the public baths in London, dived in head first at the end where the water was only four feet deep, and struck his head against the bottom with such force as to fracture one of the bones of the spine, from which he died a few hours afterward.

THREE young women were recently drowned while bathing in a stream near Janesville, Wis. One of them got beyond her depth, when a second went to help her, but only added to the danger of the situation, and the shrieks of the two induced a third to rush to the rescue, when they all disappeared beneath the water together.

A THIRTEEN-YEAR-OLD boy, in Lowell, Mass., the other day, seized from the pocket of a drunken man a bottle containing half a pint of whiskey, ran off with it, drank it, and soon after became confused, ran around the park into the street, and striking his head against a tree, fell insensible. His recovery was looked upon as doubtful.

THE oldest surviving graduate of Harvard University is Hon. Samuel Thatcher, of Massachusetts, who was born in 1776, and graduated in 1802. The next oldest is the Hon. Horace Binney, of Philadelphia, who was born in 1780, graduated in 1797, and was a member of Congress from 1833 to 1838.

NOTWITHSTANDING the rigid enforcement of the prohibitory liquor law in Massachusetts, two young women, apparently about twenty years of age, were staggering along the streets of Fall River on Friday afternoon of last week, so drunk that they could hardly walk.

A YOUNG lady at Cumberland, Md., who had been dumb for five years, was lately returning from church, thinking of a hymn which had been sung. She involuntarily attempted to hum the tune, when she was delighted to find her voice completely restored.

A DETROIT woman was lately married while her son, a young man of twenty, who had appeared on the scene with a revolver, threatening to shoot the bridegroom and clergyman, was held down and sat on by some of the invited guests.

A MARRIAGE party left Washington for Alexandria the other afternoon on a steamboat, met the officiating clergyman on the wharf, the pilot acted as witness, and the ceremony was performed in the pilot house.

A MAN in Newark, N. J., who lost both of his hands by a railroad accident, is enabled by artificial hands to maintain his position as a railroad employe. He can lift articles, write, and do many other surprising things.

NATURE seems to be on the rampage everywhere this season. Madagascar has recently been visited by tornadoes of inconceivable violence, which prostrated whole towns, and spread ruin on every hand.

IT is reported that a wife in Ohio recently recovered a verdict of seven thousand dollars against a liquor dealer, under the new law in that State, for "the loss of her husband's society for three years."

WHILE a young man was sitting on the steps of his mother's house in Portland, Me., a few evenings ago, he received a bullet in his head from a pistol fired by some unknown person. He will recover.

A YOUNG man at work in a stove lining factory in Taunton, had both of his hands crushed, by accidentally getting them caught in the machinery, on Thursday of last week.

A CITIZEN of South Lee, Mass., fell from his wagon, which was heavily loaded with stone, and the wheels passing over his body, he was crushed to death.

A BOY lately died in London from convulsions, caused by having a red-hot rivet dropped down his back by a playmate.

DURING the month of June sixteen million feet of lumber was shipped from one port in Maine.

THE champion athlete of Switzerland is a student from Macon, Ga.

SHOULD I REPINE, WHEN TIME FORGIVES?

BY NATHAN D. URNER.

Still, dewy green and daisy dressed,
Slopes down the meadow fair and sweet,
The sunshine sleeping on its breast,
The river dreaming at its feet.
There winds the narrow path that links
The boat-house with the farm-house dear,
And yonder in the sunlight winks
The bubbling spring so bright and clear.

But where is she whose steps with mine
Threaded the meadow long ago,
When love and life, like rosy wine,
Brimmed both our hearts to overflow?
Where the young face, so fair and sweet,
That seemed the soul of breathing Spring?
The voice which made my pulses beat
Fast as the lark's far-fleeting wing?

Just o'er the bordering poplars rise
The turrets of her palace home;
I gaze with sad, but tearless eyes,
Then let them once more idly roam
Along the meadow, taking in
Each landmark of the old, sweet Past,
Lost in strange dreams, air-drawn and thin,
Of how our different fates were cast.

Mine from the meadow soft hath borne
Me far away, with many a change,
O'er troubled seas and wastes forlorn,
Through defile dark and rugged range;
While hers was but a passage fleet
From green repose to wealth and state:
Life's daisies decked her maiden feet,
Life's roses wreathe her after fate.

I know not if she happier be,
But trust a cloudless life she lives;
However false she proved to me,
Should I repine, when Time forgives?
And I, at least, some peace may gain,
Here o'er the meadow-land to gaze,
And half forget my bosom's pain,
In dreaming o'er the olden days.

A BONE of CONTENTION;

—OR—

The Waldemar Succession.

By MRS. HARRIET LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE HAMPTON MYSTERY," "THE BAILIFF'S SCHEME," "THE LADY OF KILDARE," "THE OLD LIFE'S SHADOWS," "A DARING GAME," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XV.

AN INSOLENT VILLAIN.

Sir Hugh Tregaron was well aware that Darrel Moer had been a frequent visitor at the Red House during the previous winter, and that Moer had been an especial favorite with Mrs. Glint, despite his well-known reputation as a debauchee and roué. The prospects of Darrel Moer had been sufficiently dazzling to blind the eyes of the Captain's wife to all his faults, and to render her anxious to secure him as her son-in-law. So long, therefore, as Honor received Moer's visits at the Red House, and while under the chaperonage of Mrs. Glint, even Sir Hugh, who would have allowed no unclean thing to approach near to the young girl whom he secretly loved, could suspect no harm and offer no objections.

But when, as now, he beheld him sneaking like a red Indian upon the track of Honor Glint's maid, following the girl like some sleuth-hound to her home, Sir Hugh Tregaron knew that he meant mischief.

Honor Glint was no longer in the safe shelter of the Red House, no longer under the protection of Mrs. Glint, and it seemed probable to the young Cornish Baronet that Moer had discovered the young girl's homelessness, and intended to derive some advantage from the fact that she was unprotected.

"I'll keep my eye upon him," he thought. "No harm can come to Honor through him while I live. It is evident that he does not know Honor's address, and that he is seeking it in this underhand manner."

Compressing his lips closely, the young Baronet walked onward at a leisurely pace, keeping Darrel Moer at the distance of some rods in advance of him, and not losing sight of the sauntering figure of Honor's maid.

The wind was blowing freshly over the bare sands. The donkey riders, followed by the old Meolswomen and boys, were already retreating before the incoming tide. The boats that had lain near the pier-head high and dry were already rocking upon the quickening waters. The promenade, swept by the chill wind, was becoming deserted. Sir Hugh drew up his coat collar with an involuntary shiver.

Meanwhile Honor's maid, unconscious of the double pursuit, continued her journey homeward, a basket on her arm. She had been down to some little shop in the neighborhood of the railway station, and was now going home, taking a circuitous route in order that she might look upon the gray sands, the iron pier which is a mile in length, and the promenade which is always frequented, and which, at certain seasons, is covered with gay throngs.

Passing up the promenade for a considerable distance, Lucky turned off into a pleasant street and now quickened her steps. The pursuers quickened theirs also. The girl led them a brisk walk, and they found themselves at length in the Manchester Road, a pleasant, quiet street, bordered with villas and cottages of more or less pretension, and nearly all set in the midst of pleasant gardens.

Lucky Banner paused before one of these cottages, opened the gate, and passed swiftly up the walk, disappearing within the house.

Darrel Moer came up to the little gate and paused, but only for a moment. Then he also opened the gate, and sauntered up the walk. He sounded the old-fashioned knocker at the door, and waited for admission.

He was thus waiting, when Sir Hugh Tregaron came up and halted at the gate.

The young Cornish Baronet looked narrowly at the house, and at the figure in the porch. The cottage was a neat little building of stucco, with a double front. In one of the lower windows was a card bearing the legend, "Lodgings to Let." There was a bit of lawn in front, through which the original sands upon which the town is built cropped out at intervals, and there were a few shrubs. Trees are almost unknown at Southport, the thin soil in which the grasses and flowers take root having all to be imported in car loads and spread upon the sand. But to make up for the natural deficiencies of rocks, stones and trees in a region of sands, this little cottage, like many greater and lesser houses in Southport, boasted a profusion of rocks under its windows and around its porch, forming a "rockery," in which, could they have been covered with water, a sea-gnome might have dwelt contentedly. There was also upon the small lawn a huge root of a tree, upturned and sprawling, looking like some strange monster. Both rocks and tree root had been brought from a distance, and were supposed to add the charms of a bold, rocky, and well-shaded country, to the superabundant advantages of the flat and sandy town.

This cottage, like most English houses of every grade, rejoiced in a distinctive name, and was called, as an inscription over the gate informed Sir Hugh, by the title of Oak Cottage.

Sir Hugh had time to observe these peculiarities before the door opened, and an elderly woman appeared to give Mr. Moer admittance.

"There are other people in the house," thought the young Cornish man, "and he will not dare make himself obtrusive. I must see Honor, but I will wait until Moer comes out. She will send him away directly."

He walked on up the street in the gathering dusk.

Meanwhile Darrel Moer, having been admitted into the cottage by the elderly woman whom Sir Hugh had dimly seen in the doorway, halted in the little cramped hall, and inquired for Miss Glint.

"Miss Glint does not intend to see visitors, sir," declared the woman, an expression of doubt upon her severe and prim countenance. "She has come to Southport for change of air, and—"

"She will see me," interrupted Mr. Moer composedly, removing his greatcoat and hat. "I am just from Bolton—from Mrs. Glint—and I have a message for Miss Glint. Show me the way to her rooms."

"Her rooms are on the ground floor here, sir. The door at your left, sir, at your very elbow, opens into Miss Glint's parlor. If you will give me your name, I will see if the young lady will see you."

"Thank you," responded Moer, "but I'm a very old friend of Miss Glint, and I prefer to surprise her by appearing unexpectedly. I won't trouble you any further."

Unheeding the startled and ominous expression upon the woman's countenance, Darrel Moer, with an easy smile upon his dark face, rapped lightly upon the door at his left, and without waiting for any response, boldly opened the door and entered Honor's parlor. He closed the door behind him abruptly, in the face of the shocked lodging-house keeper, who had intended to follow him into Honor's presence, and turned the key in the lock.

The small parlor was untenanted at the moment of his entrance, but there were evidences of a refined occupation of it, and of a recent feminine presence within it. The room was fitted up after the usual manner of lodging-house sitting-rooms, with a worn Brussels carpet, a worn hair-cloth covered couch, and hair-cloth covered chairs; but since Honor had come into possession of it, an air of brightness and coziness had been imparted to the grim furniture by bright chintz slip covers, and a warm-colored drugget had been laid upon the floor. The Liverpool coal fire in the polished grate filled the room with ruddy gleams. Honor's pretty portable desk of malachite lay open upon a table near one of the windows, and upon the same table was a dainty work-box, also open, with a strip of ruffling in which a needle glittered lying across it, and with a tiny gold thimble and scissors' case beside it.

A few books belonging to Honor were scattered here and there, and filled a little swinging case of folding shelves which Honor had brought from the Red House. There were upon the walls some treasured pictures, the work of Honor's own hands at school, or the gifts of friends. Before the fire was drawn up a little tea-table, ready for the evening meal, and this last feature completed the home-like appearance of the room.

Darrel Moer had completed his survey of the apartment, and was still standing near the door, when the door of the inner room opened, and Honor entered the little lighted parlor.

She was dressed in black, and was very pale, but she was by no means the broken-down young creature Darrel Moer had expected to see. He had left Yorkshire that morning, as we have described, and had proceeded to Bolton, and to the Red House. He had been accorded an interview with Mrs. Glint, who had informed him of Honor's departure from her home in much the same terms in which the same fact had been previously communicated to Sir Hugh Tregaron. He had traced Honor to Southport, as Sir Hugh had done, and had chanced to see Honor's maid almost immediately upon leaving the station. He had followed her with the success we have seen, and had thought to find his young wife heart-broken and utterly despairing.

He experienced a sense of chagrin as he saw that the calm sweetness of her brows was unruffled, that the vivid splendor of her black eyes was undimmed, that the tender sensitive mouth was more resolute than of old, and that the bright piquancy of her spirited face was not lessened. She showed, indeed, that she had suffered—was still suffering with that intensity possible only to natures like hers—but she bore her sorrow bravely, hiding it in her heart, that mortal eyes might not look upon it.

On entering, she did not see the sinister figure just inside her door and leaning carelessly against it, but as she approached the fire, Darrel Moer started forward, revealing his presence.

Honor did not start, nor even show surprise, at thus unexpectedly beholding him. Perhaps she had expected him to seek her sooner or later. But she retreated a few steps before he could speak, and called to her maid, who hurriedly emerged also from the inner room.

The dismay of the faithful Lucky was exhibited in her pallor, and in the low shriek that came from her lips, as she beheld the enemy of her young mistress.

"To what am I indebted for the honor of this visit, Mr. Moer?" demanded his young bride haughtily.

"Is there anything so strange in the fact that I should desire to visit you?" inquired Moer irritably and reproachfully. "Have I not a right to visit you? Do you not belong to me?"

"No, I do not belong to you!" cried Honor, her young voice ringing, her eyes flashing. "You have no right to follow me to this place. I demand that you leave me immediately."

"I have something to say to you that is of importance, Honor," said Moer, changing his tone. "Send out that idiot of a girl. I want no witnesses to comment upon every word I shall speak."

"You can have nothing to say to me that Lucky may not hear," said Honor calmly. "I shall never see you alone and without witnesses, Darrel Moer. If you have anything to say, say it quickly, and in the presence of my maid."

Moer frowned, but drew nearer his young bride.

"Do you forget, Honor," he asked, "that you are plighted to me by vows which you cannot break? Do you forget that you are my lawful wife?"

The girl's features quivered with sudden pain.

"Ah, no, I do not forget," she murmured. "The memory is like a blight upon me."

"You abandoned me at the very altar," said Moer. "With the vows fresh upon your lips to love, honor and obey me, you fled from me and hid yourself that I might not easily find you. Is it thus you keep your marriage vows, Honor—those vows which are registered in heaven?"

"Do you fling the blame upon me?" demanded Honor, her pale face all aglow. "Do you dare accuse me of wrong-doing, Darrel Moer? I went to the altar with you, not loving you—God help me!—but trusting you, grateful to you, and with a heart so full of tenderness for you that you might easily have won it to yourself forever. But you—you repented on the very way, that your infatuation for me had led you so far. I can understand now your silence, your strange manner, upon that ride to the chapel. And when your friend came to you with letters, and you took him into the inner room off the vestry and showed to him all the vileness of your soul, and declared your horror at the marriage with me, which prevented you from laying suit to some lady of higher rank and greater wealth than I can ever boast, I heard every word you uttered. Those words dropped upon my writhing soul like burning coals. They outraged my pride, my modesty, and they turned every possibility of tenderness toward you that was in my nature into a loathing and detestation too great for words. You unmasked yourself, Darrel Moer, and you have yourself to blame that I shrink from the loathsome object you have shown yourself to be."

Darrel Moer's face whitened with rage, but he forced himself to speak calmly. He was determined to secure the certificate of her marriage now in Honor's possession, and fair means were to be thoroughly tried before resorting to foul means.

"Honor," he said hoarsely, "can you not make allowance for the state of mind I was in when I uttered those words that stung you so cruelly? I had just received a letter from my uncle's business agent, informing me that I was no longer my uncle's heir, no longer next in the Waldemar succession, but that I was likely to be forced at my age, with my habits, to earn my own living! Conceive the effect upon a mind like mine of a revelation like that! I was cowardly, I own; base, mean, cruel, if you will; but I never dreamed that you could hear me, or that you would abandon me for a few hasty words. I repent, Honor, and I beg you to forgive me."

"I forgive you, Mr. Moer," said Honor coldly.

"And you will live with me as my wife, which you legally are?"

The girl's face was instinct with a haughty surprise.

"Certainly not!" she answered coolly.

She was so slender and small as she stood there, that Darrel Moer believed that he could crush her out of life with one hand, and a murderous instinct came upon him to make the attempt. But when, choking with anger, his bloodshot eyes lingered in a wolfish gaze upon her haughtily poised head, upon her wondrously lovely face, her glowing eyes, her red mouth, her small spirited chin, a swift revulsion of feeling came over him. All his old infatuation for her came upon him again in a swift tide. He did not want even then to acknowledge his marriage with her, so deep and thorough was his villainy; but a new and devilish thought possessed him with sudden force. This girl was his bride. Why should he not possess her secretly, and make the heiress of Floyd Manor his wife in the eyes of all the world? He could destroy all proofs of the first marriage, that the second might not be invalidated, and yet preserve to Honor the self-respect that was dearer to her than life.

His changed sentiments showed themselves in his countenance, but Honor was not moved by the softening of his features or his changed manner. She knew him at last as he was—fickle as the wind, changeful as the tide, unstable as water—a human quicksand, whom to trust was to bespeak destruction.

"You cannot rub out the fact that you are my wife, Honor," he exclaimed, in an eager, pleading voice. "You are bound to me by a tie you cannot break. Forgive me in earnest, as well as in mere words, and come back to me. Be my own loving wife, Honor."

He held out his hands, but suffered them to drop to his side as Honor's lip curled in disdain, and as Honor answered:

"Darrel Moer, you cannot bridge the gulf between us. I will never call myself by your name, nor declare to the world that I am your wife. I have no wifely love for you, and I will not feign any. I know you as you are, and I despise you."

"I can force you to live with me," cried Moer fiercely, nearly beside himself.

"I think not," answered Honor calmly. "At any rate, I will put you to the trouble of going to law to get possession of me. I am, unfortunately, your wife, but I assure you that I will die before I will ever be more to you than I am at this moment. Knowing you as I now know you, I do not believe that you will incur the publicity of a court of law in order to compel a woman to live with you who despises you. I am willing to make a compact with you, however. It is this: Leave me alone, and I'll leave you alone."

"And why should I leave you alone?" asked Moer jealously. "So that you will feel free to make another marriage? You can't do that, you know, while I live. Mrs. Glint told me to-day, when I went to the Red House and asked to see you, that Sir Hugh Tregaron was there yesterday, after your return from the chapel, and had a long private interview with you. And Mrs. Glint said that the result of that interview was your speedy departure from the Red House, and from all the restraints of her household. And she said also, that last evening, an hour or so after you left the Red House, Sir Hugh Tregaron came again and asked to see you. She told him that you were gone, and under such circumstances as precluded all possibility of your return to her house. What did Tregaron say? Why, when she begged him to spend the evening, he said, with a lofty and imperious kind of way, that the house his future wife could not be permitted to enter could never shelter him. And with that he departed."

"He said that?" said Honor, her face kindling.

"He did. He evidently looks upon you as the future Lady Tregaron," and the jealous glare in Moer's eyes deepened. "You seem the most innocent of girls, Honor Glint, but it may be all seeming. You may be deep and scheming enough to think to throw me over, because I no longer stand a chance in the Waldemar succession, and because I am suddenly poor. Tregaron belongs to a proud old family, as ancient, but in point of rank far below the Waldemars, of course, yet a prize beside the ruined Darrel Moer. You cannot become Lady Tregaron while I live, Honor. Bear that in mind. Is Tregaron at Southport?" he added suspiciously.

Honor's face flushed with indignation. She would not reply to the question so insultingly asked.

"I want to make a last appeal to you," said Moer, after an uneasy silence, during which he resolved again to change his course. "Honor, I am weak and faulty and all that, but I love you. You can do what you will with me. I take back my insinuation that Tregaron knows your present lodging. I take back all that I have said that can in the least wound your delicacy. I love you, and I ask you—for your sake as well as mine—to go with me to some country place, there to live with me as my wife."

"You must be fond of refusals thus to risk another, Mr. Moer," responded the young girl. "I will have nothing to do with you. I shall stay in this house, and it is time for you to leave it. The landlady was an under-teacher at the school I attended, and is my friend. She wrote to me a few weeks since, on taking this cottage, asking me to recommend her to any Bolton people who might be coming to Southport to stay a few days or weeks, and I came directly to her house on arriving in the town. I have only to tell her my story to win her protection—"

"To insure your being set out into the street," interrupted Darrel Moer sneeringly. "I have not learned to read faces to be deceived by that of your landlady. At the merest suspicion that a scandal might be aroused in connection with you, she would hurry you out of her house, lest the reputation of her lodgings should suffer. If I'm not much mistaken, she's on the other side of your door, trying to catch here and there a scrap of conversation. She's one of your prim and severe women, who are hardest of all people upon those of their own sex. She heard me lock the door when I entered—I'll unlock it now—and went into agonies over it."

He unlocked the door as he spoke, and flung himself coolly into Honor's chair before the hearth.

"You will be kind enough to rise and go away immediately," said the girl, with haughty sternness.

"You are afraid my presence here will compromise you with your spinster landlady, eh?" sneered Darrel Moer. "Very good. I have found a lever to work upon. I shall stay here, Honor Glint, until you consent to go away with me as my wife—if I have to stay all night!"

"You cannot force me to remain," said Honor, her passionate young voice all in a quiver. "Come, Lucky, we will go into Miss Brown's rooms—"

"I'll follow you, and tell Miss Brown that you're my wife," exclaimed Moer. "Come, come, make the best of it, Honor. If you persist in holding out against me, I shall think that Tregaron knows where you are, and that you are expecting to marry him as soon as you can get clear of me. By George! your anxiety to get me out of the house almost makes me think that you may be expecting him here this evening. If this were so, I should be tempted to kill you;" and he looked at her with another kindling of the jealous fury within him.

At that moment a double knock was heard on the outer door. The landlady was heard to answer the summons, and a moment later she flung open Honor's door, and ushered into Honor's room—Sir Hugh Tregaron!

CHAPTER XVI.

HONOR'S MISERY AND DESPERATION.

The young Cornish Baronet had wandered up and down the street, full of anxiety and restlessness, waiting for Darrel Moer to reappear; but as Moer lingered within the walls of Oak Cottage, and the light gloom deepened and the night fell, Sir Hugh's fears in regard to Honor Glint increased, and he said to himself:

"Moer is just the man to take advantage of Honor's helplessness to insult her. She may need some friend to protect her from his intrusiveness. I am the one to protect her, for she has owned she loves me, and she is to be my wife. I will not stay out here longer when that man, whose very glance at an honest woman should be deemed an insult, is in there with her. Perhaps—poor homeless child!—she is even now longing for my presence."

The thought spurred him to action. He hastened to seek admission into the cottage. The landlady, with a waspish expression of countenance, showed him into Honor's room, and abruptly retreated into the hall.

Darrel Moer stared at the new arrival in amazement, and drew his breath hard, while a cruel, angry gleam burned like a red spark in his eyes. He believed, of course, that Honor had deceived him, and he watched her from that moment as a cat watches a mouse.

Honor's maid uttered a joyful exclamation.

But Honor herself did not speak, or give utterance to a sound. She sprang forward involuntarily, however, and her face with its rare splendor kindled with a radiance such as Darrel Moer had never seen upon it. Her whole soul glowing with sudden joy glorified her features, and Darrel Moer knew then how she could love—and how she *did* love the young Baronet.

He gnashed his teeth in his anger.

Honor extended both her hands to Sir Hugh, and he took them in his. For the moment the young lovers, severed by the barrier which one rash act had reared between them, stood forgetful of Darrel Moer and the girl Lucky, and were conscious only of each other's presence.

"Why did you run away from me, Honor?" breathed Sir Hugh, in a whisper too low for even Moer's jealous ears, while his grand face beamed with his joy at finding again his love. "When Mrs. Glint turned against you, you should have sent a messenger to me. I should not have permitted my little girl to knock about the world in this fashion."

What tender refuge his words and tones promised her—and she could never accept it! Her mad and fatal marriage must separate them forever. With a low sob that was half smothered in her slender throat, Honor released her hand and motioned her guest to a seat.

Sir Hugh greeted Moer politely, but with a gravity that declared to Honor how little he was pleased to see him there in her rooms. Then he sat down, with the evident determination of outstaying Darrel Moer.

"Have you been in Southport long, Sir Hugh?" inquired Moer, with a sneering smile.

"I came last evening, sir," was the cool response.

A red light leaped into Moer's eyes.

"You came down with Miss Glint then?" he asserted, rather than asked.

"Not so," replied Sir Hugh, with a quiet sternness that awed his interlocutor. "I called at the Red House last evening and discovered that Mrs. Glint had dared to send from the shelter of her husband's roof her husband's adopted daughter. It was easy to find that Miss Glint had come to Southport, her natural refuge, since she spent years at school here. This morning I went to the school which Miss Glint formerly attended, and failing to obtain news of her, I searched all the hotels to-day and looked elsewhere for her. I was still searching this afternoon, when I beheld you, Mr. Moer, following Miss Glint's maid, whom I see is present, and I followed you in turn to this house. I have been waiting outside for you to take your departure."

"That is devilish cool, I must say," ejaculated Darrel Moer. "By what right, may I ask, Sir Hugh Tregaron, do you follow me here and wait outside for me to take my leave? By what right do you dare intrude yourself into Miss Glint's apartments?"

"By the right of the honest love I bear her," answered Sir Hugh Tregaron sternly, a commanding haughtiness glooming his gray eyes. "I have asked Miss Glint to become my honored wife, and as her future husband I am here, sir, to protect her from you, and such as you."

"Ah-h! Miss Glint has promised to marry you?"

"It can make no difference to you, Mr. Moer, whether I am an accepted suitor or otherwise," said Sir Hugh, with increasing sternness. "Since Captain Glint is not here to protect his daughter, I shall do so in his stead. Miss Glint does not know the reputation you bear in society. She has been so carefully sheltered and cherished, that she is not aware that no honest woman can receive your visits without risk of exciting scandal. A pure girl should avoid Darrel Moer as she would avoid a deadly snake!"

"You are complimentary," sneered Moer.

"Oh, Hugh! Sir Hugh!" breathed Honor softly, in a gathering terror and dread.

"My darling!" returned Sir Hugh, in an undertone, "do you think I shall not protect you? This man is not fit to sit in your presence. I cannot permit you, in your girlish fear of him, to endure what is plainly a persecution!"

Honor trembled, and her fingers laced themselves together, fluttering nervously like frightened birds.

She looked from one to the other of her lovers in a wild appeal.

"I suppose," said Darrel Moer indolently, "that it can make no difference to you, Sir Hugh Tregaron, what guests Miss Glint chooses to entertain, provided she does choose to entertain them? Ask Miss Glint if I am not welcome. She will hardly tell you No. Ask her if she desires me to leave this place. Ask her if she believes your libelous remarks against me."

Sir Hugh directed a keen swift glance at Honor. He saw that she was pale with alarm, and that there was an unmistakable expression of aversion, even of loathing, on her face, which was turned toward Moer.

"My poor little girl!" he thought. "She is afraid of him. He has been persecuting her with his attentions, as I thought."

His face grew sterner, and he said coolly:

"There is no need to ask Miss Glint the nature of her sentiments toward you, Mr. Moer. Her face expresses them without need of words. I see that your presence is distasteful to her."

"People have to endure many things in this world that are distasteful to them," drawled Darrel Moer lazily.

Sir Hugh rose up, his tall figure instinct with stern command, his eyes full of fire, and exclaimed haughtily:

"Mr. Darrel Moer, as Miss Glint's friend and future husband, I command you to leave this house at once. The sooner you go, the better it will be for you. If you object to going, I shall not have the slightest objection to put you out. And permit me to warn you never to intrude upon Miss Glint again, except at your own personal risk."

Darrel Moer's face flamed. He grated his teeth, and looked as if he meant to show fight; but a timely sense of caution restrained him. It was not that he was a coward, but he reflected that if he persisted in remaining in Honor's rooms, Honor would be compelled in self-defence to exhibit to Sir Hugh her certificate of marriage. And as he meant to destroy every scrap of written proof of that ill-starred marriage, and to deny to every one that such a marriage had taken place, it behooved him to act now, in Sir Hugh's presence, as if he had no deep personal interest in Honor.

He therefore arose, with a deep, mocking bow, and said, in a discordant voice, the full significance of his words being comprehended only by his young bride:

"Of course I cannot resist the authority of a betrothed husband. I retire as gracefully as my great haste will permit. You will allow me to assure the future Lady Tregaron, Sir Hugh, that I will not again intrude upon her. In fact, since I know your claims upon her, I beg to withdraw mine. I leave Southport to-night. If I do not demand too much, I beg you to send me cards to your wedding."

With another bow, and another sneering smile that quivered in every muscle of his dark Italian face, Darrel Moer retired from the room.

On finding himself alone in the hall, he shook his fist at the closed door, and muttered, with a look of deadly menace;

"So that's the game, is it? I'll see if I can't spoil it. I'll have Bing steal that marriage certificate, and then, my fair Honor, you will be at my mercy. You are to be my wife, and not Sir Hugh Tregaron's. I'll possess that girl, if for no other reason than to avenge myself on them both!"

Neither Sir Hugh nor Honor spoke until Moer had quitted the house.

Honor's maid made a movement to withdraw, but the young mistress commanded her to remain by a gesture. She retired to a further corner with a book, and became apparently absorbed in its contents.

"Honor," said the young Baronet, in a low voice, "you must not be subjected to persecutions like these. Darrel Moer is a man to pursue any object which eludes him with impatience amounting to ferocity, but were the prize once within his hands, it would seem valueless to him. We will not speak further of him, for he is no fit subject for your thoughts, only I will say that he must not intrude upon you again. How did you happen to come to this house, Honor?"

"The landlady, Miss Brown, was an under-teacher in our school," said Honor. "She had laid up a little money, and being tired of teaching, has rented this house, and expects to support herself by taking lodgers. She's a very respectable person, Sir Hugh, and she will be fully competent to protect me."

"I cannot leave you here," declared Sir Hugh decisively. "This is no place for you, my own darling. The Captain is absent, and he has no relatives in England to whom you can go. You must go to my people, Honor. I have an aunt who will love you and receive you as her own daughter until our marriage can take place. That must be soon, darling. We will not even wait for Captain Glint's return."

Honor trembled. The cup of happiness was held very close to her parched lips, and yet she must not drink of it.

"Oh, Sir Hugh!" she whispered. "It cannot be. I cannot marry you. Do not ask me why."

"But you love me, Honor. You confessed as much to me at the Red House yesterday. And if you love me, what can come between us?"

Honor hesitated. The story of her mad marriage trembled on her lips, but she could not tell it. The grave and tender eyes fixed upon her, the grandly noble face of her lover, stirred her soul to its depths. She felt that she ought not to listen to words of love from Sir Hugh, nor allow him to waste his life and his love upon one who could never be his wife. She moved away from him in an uncontrollable agitation.

"Sir Hugh," she whispered, her golden head drooping, "oh, I am very miserable—and the more miserable that I must make you unhappy. Indeed I cannot be your wife. Only yesterday morning I was free—free as the wind that is blowing now—and now I am bound—bound—"

Her voice broke down in a piteous sob.

"Bound by a promise to another?" said Sir Hugh.

The girl nodded dumbly.

"To Darrel Moer, Honor?"

The girl's head drooped yet lower. Her attitude was sufficient assent.

"My poor Honor!" said Sir Hugh, with an infinite tenderness. "Then all this self-torture and this sorrow to me springs from the workings of your sensitive conscience. A bad promise is easily broken, my own darling—"

"Oh, don't, don't!" murmured the girl pitifully. "This is more than I can bear! Oh, Sir Hugh, I have been mad! You don't understand me yet. I hate Darrel Moer. I fear him. His gaze almost paralyzes me. I believe him capable of any wickedness—and yet—and yet— O Heaven!"

"You are afraid to break with the scoundrel, Honor?" asked Sir Hugh, his tones soft and soothing, and full of loving gentleness. "You are losing your high courage under all this pressure, my darling. I must hasten to take you into my own keeping, regardless of this promise to Mr. Darrel Moer."

He moved as if to take her in his arms. She eluded his grasp, and fled from him swiftly, hurrying to her little open desk. She extracted from an inner compartment a folded paper, and came back to him, panting and wild-eyed, crying out:

"You will never call me your darling again, Sir Hugh. You see that you and I must henceforth be strangers. You will marry some one of your own rank in life, while I—Heaven pity me! Read that—read it, Sir Hugh!"

She placed in his hands the certificate of her marriage to Darrel Moer.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE WRONG PACKAGE.

Pilgarlic was once the victim of a sad mistake, as we will proceed to show. Pilgarlic was affianced to Jerusha Ann Jones, and the happy day had been fixed which was to see them united in the blissful bonds of wedlock forever and forever. At Mrs. Muggleton's party Pilgarlic was introduced to the beautiful young actress, Miss Fitzharpsichord, and during the evening he paid her so much attention that his Jerusha was terribly jealous. A quarrel was the result, and at the door of Mrs. Muggleton's mansion, late at night, the lovers parted in anger, the injured Jerusha going home with her brother.

On the following morning Pilgarlic repented of his conduct, and with the desire to conciliate the fair one, whose expectations from a wealthy though somewhat penurious father were of a high order, he purchased a silk dress pattern of rare quality and style, and having written a contrite note to accompany the present, he gave it into the hands of a servant to deliver at her dwelling.

The servant, before setting forth upon his errand, bethought him that a pair of his master's pantaloons needed repairing, and as he was to pass the tailor's on his way, he would take them. So he did them up in a piece of wrapping paper, and started off. On his way he slipped and fell, and the written note for the young lady was dislodged from its package; but he picked it up, and as he thought put it back into its place, though the sequel proved that the similarity of the bundles had led him into a grievous error.

Imagine Jerusha Ann's feelings when, having read her lover's note of professed repentance, in which he hoped that the "slight token of his regard" thus sent "would eminently befit and become her," etc., she opened the package and found therein a—*pair of pantaloons!*

The next time Pilgarlic called, the door was indignantly slammed in his face by the irate fair one, who would listen to no explanation or apology, and the marriage was effectually broken off. Pilgarlic was for a time sober and thoughtful, and was inclined to curse the mistake of his servant; but in the end he accepted the event as a blessing in disguise, as subsequent revealments proved that had Jerusha Ann received the silk dress as he had intended, she would not only have worn *that*, but she might have worn *the other garment also!*

S. C. JR.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, AUGUST 10, 1872.

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Know Before You Speak.

Among the petty dishonesties of common life, there are some more hurtful, but perhaps none more paltry, than that of pretending to know where one is ignorant. It is a fault into which many not ill-meaning persons are drawn, from a false shame which would probably be checked if any immediate evil consequences seemed likely to flow from it. They dislike to appear at a loss, or under a shortcoming, about anything; and thus are tempted either to affect knowledge where they have it not, or in some way to allow it to be supposed that they are not ignorant. For example, some one adverts to a fact in science with which he is familiar. Perhaps it is brought forward for the instruction or entertainment of the rest—perhaps to show his own knowledge—perhaps only in the fair course of conversation: no matter how it may be in this respect, the point at present in question is the want of candor in the persons whom he is addressing, in hearing as if they understood that and all the related facts, putting on an intelligent look, assenting to the proposition as if convinced of its soundness, and perhaps even hazarding some remarks that may favor the supposition of their being as well informed on the subject as the first speaker. Or perhaps a passage of a classic or foreign author is quoted—pedantically or otherwise, it matters not—what we have to remark is the unconscientiousness of the rest of the company, or of particular members of it, in letting the thing pass as an intelligible part of the discourse, and appearing to sanction its appositeness, when, in reality, they are either altogether ignorant of the language in which it is written, or have been unable to follow the sense of the passage with any degree of clearness.

When any rational and well-meaning person feels himself tempted into such courses, let him only consider how absurd it is to suppose that there can be any real disgrace in being ignorant of any particular fact whatever. Science is a vast field—so is learning—insomuch that there can be no man in existence acquainted with the whole of either. The most eminent in both scientific knowledge and in learning know only a part, and are liable to be found ignorant of much. When, therefore, any ordinary person is found unacquainted with some particular fact, or even with some entire science, or some whole language, there is no reason why he should be deemed a generally ignorant man. It may be presumed that, if he is ignorant of one thing, he is conversant with another, *as is the case with the most eminent students*; and thus he may pass very well, though openly acknowledging that on the point in question he is blank as a new-born babe. There is a story of Sheridan having once apparently quoted a passage from a Greek poet in the House of Commons, when in reality he only uttered a gabble resembling Greek. An honorable gentleman, who spoke after him, fully assented to the application of the passage to the case in question. How ineffably ridiculous must that man have appeared when Sheridan disclosed the trick! This is a dishonor to which every one is exposed who in any way, however slight or negative, affects to appear knowing where he is ignorant.

Henry Ward Beecher's Horse.

Some people are very much opposed to fast horses; yet they do not ride with oxen. They think that perhaps a three-minute horse may be unobjectionable; but they shake their heads in doubt about the propriety of anything faster than that.

We have heard of one man who carried his doubts in the same direction a little further. He not only thought it was not right for a minister to keep a fast horse, but he carried the principle to a still greater extent: he did not think it was right that a minister should have one horse which was better than his other horse; so he stole the best horse that HENRY WARD BEECHER had and took him away, and has never returned him.

Mr. BEECHER, although a clergyman, does not appreciate this kind of conscientiousness; and we dare say that his own amiability of disposition would be more enhanced by the return of the horse, than it was by his being taken away.

Mr. BEECHER does not subscribe to the doctrine that a good horse is not a good thing for a good minister to have.

Mr. Bonner's Horses.

[From the London Daily Telegraph, July 4.]

The untiring perseverance of our Trans-atlantic kinsmen, and especially of Mr. Robert Bonner, the proprietor of *The New York Ledger*, is eminently calculated to bring the powers of the trotting horse nearer and nearer to the highest pitch of speed that equine legs and lungs are capable of attaining. A telegram has just arrived from Boston, Mass., announcing that a famous trotter, named Joe Elliott, the property of Mr. Bonner, has accomplished one mile in 2 minutes 15½ seconds, upon the Mystic Park Course at Boston. This is undoubtedly the fastest trotting time on record. It is but just to give Mr. Bonner credit for being one of the most ardent and unmercenary lovers of horse-flesh in the world. A self-made man, and the architect of his own fortune, Mr. Bonner is not to be stopped by any price when he has a chance of securing animals that may beat Flora Temple's, or Dexter's time; but nothing will ever tempt him to engage any of his flyers in a public trotting match.

I Thought It My Duty.

People are very often heard to say, "I thought it my duty to do such a thing." It too frequently happens that what they thought it their duty to do, was some mischief, which lay ten miles out of their way. At a fair computation, fully one-half of the bad things done, out of the ranks of the avowedly vicious, are done under the impulse of a sense of duty.

A very common use of the phrase, "I thought it my duty," refers to some unpleasing communication. One man thinks it his duty to inform his friend that some person or persons have been speaking evilly of him, or undervaluing some pursuit in which he is engaged. Another thinks it his duty to warn some person against some person. Another thinks it his duty to administer a point-blank reproof to some one with whose conduct he has been displeased. It too often happens that, instead of being prompted by a pure sense of duty, such communications are the result of some inferior feelings, which have only taken the guise of conscientiousness; at least, it is rarely that such communications are made in a prudent and kindly manner. Hence it is not surprising that, so far from producing the apparently desired benefit, they only aggrieve the feelings of the individual who is the object of them, and introduce discord and rancor where formerly all was going on in the common course of things. The number of officious interferences, prompted in the same way, and ending in the same results, is beyond all calculation. It is quite possible for one person thus to drive a whole circle of friends to distraction—under a sense of duty.

Since men so often go wrong when acting under what they suppose to be a sense of duty, it will naturally be asked, How are they to avoid such errors, and how are they to make sure that any notion of duty that may arise in their minds is a right one? It would require an elaborate treatise to give a satisfactory answer embodying the workings of the genuine conscience and the mock ones; but in the mean time something less may suffice. There is an excellent old rule which says, "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you." If men and women acted under a sense of all the bearings of this precept, more than nine-tenths of the mischief caused by the shallow plea, "I thought it my duty," would be averted.

A Breath of Cool Air—How to Appreciate Blessings.

It has been remarked often, and very truly, that people are incapable of appreciating anything until they have been deprived of it. This applies even to our most common blessings. We do not know how refreshing and delicious pure cold water is, especially from

"The old oaken bucket that hangs in the well,"

until we happen to be in some place where the water is brackish or hard, and we cannot obtain any fit to drink.

For several weeks during the present summer, the prevailing feeling has been that there was nothing else in this world quite so delightful as a breath of cool fresh air.

The excessive heat has driven people well-nigh to madness. They have suffered so dreadfully from it, that they have felt as if the one great thing requisite to make life pleasant, or even tolerable, was a moderately low degree of temperature.

When we have a cool, comfortable summer, we think little of it; but in the intense heat with which we have been afflicted, a long journey would have seemed very short if we felt that it was certain to take us amid cool breezes, and away from sweltering days and nights.

So it is. The poor prisoner feels that the liberty to which the multitude outside seem so indifferent, is a boon of priceless value. The hungry appreciate food, and the thirsty drink; and a million readers, if they were to be deprived of the *Ledger* for a single week, would know, even better than they do now, what a pleasant and entertaining visitor it is.

The Death-Rate among Poor Children.

The frightful mortality among the destitute and outcast children of this city during the heated term has occasioned much discussion of their condition, and led to the suggestion of many good-hearted but utterly impracticable plans for their relief. The simple fact of the matter is, that so long as the present tenement-house system is permitted to exist, there can be no relief for the denizens of those vast and reeking hives of humanity, as everybody who has ever looked closely into the matter and analyzed the situation knows. And the tenement-house system cannot be got rid of except by such a business revolution and social convulsion as no one in this generation is likely to see. Therefore the terrible death-rate among the children of the overcrowded poor in this metropolis, in seasons like the present, will and must continue. A block of houses containing several thousand tenants, who are habituated to slovenliness, who live on a meagre supply of food, which is often stale and deleterious in quality, and breathe an atmosphere which, in their overcrowded condition, all the resources of science could not keep pure, and which is in fact debilitating and poisonous, cannot be anything else than a den of death, with the thermometer ranging from ninety to a hundred degrees in the shade, for days and nights together. A majority of children that should be kept clean and well fed, would succumb to the baleful influences of such a condition. What, then, can be expected of the neglected, half-starved, diseased little skeletons that swarm by hundreds and thousands in the densely populated tenement-house regions of the city? We might as well look this matter square in the face.

"They have Seen Better Days."

There is something deeply and peculiarly affecting in the expression—applied to persons in distress—"they have seen better days." No claim upon our sympathy touches us so nearly as this. When woman, in particular, gentle, good, and unobtrusive, is the unfortunate object that has "seen better days," the case is still more strongly calculated to move our compassion; for we are usually inclined to presume, and with probability, that though she is a participator in the sad reverse, she could not have had any blamable share in producing it. Of all objects of pity, indeed, under the sun, the woman who has undergone a change in her estate, and bears her fall with uncomplaining mildness and patience, is one of the most truly and profoundly interesting. Shoeless, garmentless, homeless poverty, poverty that sits by the wayside begging, with its many wants obtruded on every hand, never touches the soul with a pang a hundredth part so acute, as does the shrinking, carefully concealed indigence of the woman who has "seen better days."

HOW TO BEAUTIFY HOMES.

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

There are a few facts of a familiar kind which may aid in making many a place beautiful, which I will submit to the great household of the *Ledger*. No one needs to be told how much a house is adorned by *vines*; and yet many are averse to their liberal use from the impression that they make a house damp. It is true that they *may*, but it is not necessary that they should. Vines do not *collect* dampness. If any part of the house wall needs the sun to warm it, and is covered by a vine from its influence, it may favor dampness. But an ivy vine is reputed to make a wall dry, and has sometimes been employed to correct the undue moisture to which certain portions of a dwelling are subject. A grape-vine trained upon slats, which shall have a few inches of air space underneath it, will not injure the house. Upon porches, over trellises, vines may be trained with a charming effect, and without offending those who are superstitiously prejudiced against vines *on a* house.

The kinds of vines must be left, in the case of thousands, to accident. Men that are obliged to count the very last penny in their expenses cannot send many orders to florists for beautiful things, but must take what they can get in their own neighborhood. We will mention a few things now generally diffused.

The *Glycine*, or *Wistaria*, is one of the noblest. It will run a hundred feet or more, and grows in time to have a trunk like a small tree. Nothing can surpass it at its blossoming period. It is like a vision in the garden of heaven. It may be raised by *layers*, but will be found somewhat slow in taking hold after transplantation. Its arms may be carried out in tier above tier to cover the whole side of the house, when economy of space is no object; but where one desires to spare for other things, the Wistaria may be trained upon a corner, or along the eaves.

There is nothing more beautiful in its summer greenness, or gorgeous in its autumn reds and purples, than the Virginia Creeper—*Ampelopsis hederacea*. There is a variety called *Ampelopsis Veitchii*, or Veitch's, which is extremely beautiful. It clings to wood or brick with as much tenacity as the ivy. Its foliage is fine, and its habit fits it to fill small spaces. It is a plant, once had, that no one would part with.

If one wishes a dense screen, there is no vine that grows more rapidly, that is more hardy, than the *Aristolochia Sipho*, or Dutchman's pipe. One might as well attempt to look through a brick wall as through the opaque mass made by its enormous leaves. But its coarseness fits it chiefly for hiding ungainly things or shading from the light.

The *Trumpet Creeper* is effective, at a distance, but its coarseness excludes it from familiar nearness.

Few people are aware of the vast improvements which have taken place in the *Clematis*. Every one knows the wild white Clematis, which is beautiful in blossom, and almost as fine when its seeds are ripened. It abounds in our fields, and bears transplantation easily. The new kinds, or those comparatively new, deserve to be better known. Fortune's, Henderson's, Jackman's, the Prince of Wales, Standish's, together with Helena, Sophia, Lanuginosa, are obtainable at our first-class nurseries, and may be easily propagated. Besides these, there are every year new varieties introduced. There is no vine that we should spare with more reluctance. The sheets of gorgeous bloom, which, by judicious selection of kinds, will last from June to September, the perfect hardiness of the plant, and the ease with which it is trained, fit it eminently for small places and sunny spots. For it loves the full blaze, and will not flourish well even when planted with other vines that at all shade it. Indeed, to have the best effect of Clematis, it should be trained in a clear and open space to a trellis of its own.

But, of all vines, none is more popular, and deservedly so, than the Honeysuckle. The kinds are numerous. But if but *one* can be had, let it be the *Halleana*, or Hall's Japan honeysuckle. It cannot be distinguished from the *Brachypoda*, in leaf or blossom; but it excels that immeasurably in the habit of all summer blossoming. The *Flexuoso*, or Chinese, is fine, but we consider it second to Hall's, which ought to be better known and more widely diffused than it is. By planting it on open soil, without support, it spreads over the ground, and roots at every joint, so that hundreds of new plants may be gained every year.

There is a beautiful golden honeysuckle—*aurea reticulata*. This ought not to be planted by the side of green-leaved varieties. It produces the effect of a diseased or weak branch, rather than of contrast and variety. But the golden-leaved, if planted by itself and well grown, is gorgeous. It is perfectly hardy, and is of good growth and constitution. If one has a yard of ground, he may have a vine which will through the whole summer give unfeigned pleasure.

BEARING THE HEAT.

There are different modes of exhibiting impatience under this infliction. Some people stiffen their features like a mask, lest a shadow of emotion should pass over them that could be provocative of possible perspiration. Another will sit with some little bits of consoling ice in view, and only answer, when addressed, in long-drawn monosyllables. These are mostly your full-blooded, flushy people, to whom a red face in the dog-days is a perpetual horror. Then there are your explosive sufferers, who talk loud, walk fast, eat without regard to tombstones or thermometers, trying to defy fate and fat. Then there are your busy, happy men and women who think nothing about the weather—in fact wouldn't know there was any weather, if you didn't keep groaning the fact in their ears, and who wonder that everybody can't be as happy and comfortable as themselves. Then there are your pale people, who, failing to get up a perspiration at any degree of the thermometer, and suffering pangs in consequence, wonder how those who can should ever have cause of complaint. What is a red face to their sufferings?

The truth is that occupation, in this as in other troubles, is the true panacea. Annoyance may knock in vain at the door to deaf ears, as those who have tried it know. More vitality is laid out in dodging it than anybody at the time is aware of. Our tombstones are not always ready when we think we are ready for them. There are those to whom this is a sealed text, and there are others who running may read. FANNY FERN.

HOW TO CALCULATE OUR AGE.—There is no such thing as time. It is but space occupied by incident. It is the same to eternity as matter is to infinite space—a portion of the immense occupied by something within the sphere of mortal sense. We ought not to calculate our age by the passing years, but by the passing of feelings and events. It is what we have done, and what we have suffered, makes us old.

Nine Old Persons in One Family.

[From the Poughkeepsie Press.]

There are now living, of the family of the late Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Hicks, of the town of Milan, nine daughters and two sons, whose ages are respectively as follows: 73, 71, 69, 67, 65, 63, 61, 59, 57, 55, 53—making the united ages of the living members of one family of brothers and sisters 693 years. We doubt if there is a parallel case to be found.

THE GOLD-FINGERED BRAHMIN.

A HINDOO TALE.

BY JOHN G. SAXE.

A famous merchant, who had made
A fine estate by honest trade
With foreign countries,—by mischance,
(The failure of a firm in France
And several cargoes lost at sea,)
Became as poor as poor could be;
Of all his riches saving naught,
Except, indeed, the pleasing thought
Of generous deeds in better days,
Which some remembered to his praise.
Of these, a Brahmin, who had known
The merchant ere his wealth had flown,
And how he helped the sick and poor,
Entered, one day, his open door,
And said, "My friend! I know you well;
Your former state; and what befell
That all was lost; and well I know
Your noble life, and fain would show
(Since I have power—Heaven be adored!)
How all your wealth may be restored.
Now please attend: Whene'er you see
A Brahmin who resembles me
In looks and dress, (and such an one
Will enter here at set of sun,)
Just strike him on the forehead—thrice;
And lo! his fingers, in a trice,
Will turn to solid gold! Of these
Cut off as many as you please,
(The ten will make a goodly sum,)
And thus the Brahmin-form will come
Whenever you have need of gold.
Consider well what I have told!"
With this, the Brahmin went away,
And, sure enough, at close of day,
A stranger, like the other, came,—
So like, indeed, he seemed the same,—
And sat him down; and quick as thought,
The blows are struck, the charm is wrought,
And all his fingers turn to gold!
O wondrous sight!—And now behold
The happy merchant rich once more
As in his thrifty days of yore!
A barber, curious to know
Whence all this sudden wealth might flow,
By watching, morning, noon and night,
The magic Brahmin brought to light;
At least, he thought beyond a doubt
He'd found the golden secret out;
And straight he called *three* Brahmins in,
And bade them sit: "For so I'll win,"
The fellow reasoned, "thrice as much
As if a single man I touch:
The more the men, the more the gold!
I'll have as much as I can hold
In all my pockets, at a blow!"
But when he struck the Brahmins, lo!
They turned not into golden ores,
But turned—the barber out of doors!
And, angry at his scurvy trick,
Each beat him soundly with a stick!

MORAL.

To all who read this pleasant tale,
The barber's fate may serve to teach,
How sadly imitators fail
Who aim at things beyond their reach!

CHARLES LAMB.

BY JAMES PARTON.

In one of the most ancient parts of London there is an antiquated pile of buildings, situated back from the street, with a large, well-trodden play-ground in front that is often crowded with boys at play. These boys wear a peculiar costume, and exhibit the additional peculiarity of going about out of doors bare-headed. The principal article of their attire is a blue coat, which falls down about their legs like a petticoat. When they are playing at any active game, they tuck up this petticoat about their waists, showing a pair of yellow breeches, which has rather a ludicrous effect in the eyes of the unaccustomed spectator. This establishment, though its legal name is Christ's Hospital, is a school, and is always called, from the dress of its inmates, the Blue-coat School.

Boys of this ancient foundation receive a classical education and complete maintenance from the funds of the endowment. They are allowed a good deal of liberty, and may be seen on holiday afternoons in all parts of London, in the parks and public gardens, looking in at the shop windows, always well-behaved, and regarded with a certain favor and good-will by every one. Charity school as it is, the blue uniform of the scholars is an honorable distinction; for the school has been rendered illustrious by the fame of some of its pupils. Coleridge and Charles Lamb were Blue-coat boys at the same time—Lamb from 1782 to 1790. We may say, indeed, that for whatever good and pleasure we derive from those two authors, we are indebted to this institution, but for which neither of them, in all probability, would have been educated.

Lamb's father, in point of worldly rank, was not much above a servant. He had walked from a country home to London when he was a little boy, and had entered the service of a lawyer, to whom he gradually became indispensable—his clerk much more than his servant—who really performed most of the business of the office. He had a turn for writing humorous verses, of which he published a small volume. He also moulded heads in clay or plaster of paris, and was particularly skillful with his penknife—a most dexterous, agile, merry, good-humored, brave little man; just the person to be the father of the most delightful of all the essayists of the world. His wife disappoints us rather. She was a showy, stately woman, much resembling Mrs. Siddons, fonder of plays and parties and pleasure than looking after her family.

Of their three children, Charles was the youngest—ten years younger than his sister Mary—and much the most delicate, small, shy, and likely to be neglected. He was, indeed, left too much to himself, and he browsed among the odd, heterogeneous books belonging to his father's employer, and wandered about the gardens of the Inner Temple on the banks of the Thames, the abode of many lawyers and their clerks. The witch books that he read frightened him so, that, to use his own language, "The night time, solitude and the dark were my *hell*." He did not dare, even in the day-time, to go into his bed-room without turning his face toward the window, and looking away from the bed where his witch-ridden pillow was.

"Parents," as he truly says, "do not know what they do when they leave tender babes alone to go to sleep in the dark. The feeling about for a friendly arm—the hoping for a familiar voice when they wake screaming, and find none to soothe them—what a terrible shaking it is to their poor nerves."

Not that his childhood was upon the whole unhappy or uncheerful; but both he and his sister were of that fine, nervous organization which must have peculiar care and tenderness in order not to suffer the most acute anguish. At seven, he was placed at the Blue-coat School, which at first was by no means a change for the better.

"The sight of a boy in fetters upon the day of my first putting on the blue clothes," as he says in one of his essays, "was not exactly fitted to assuage the terrors of initiation. * * I was told he had *run away*. This was the punishment for the first offence."

Soon he was taken to see the dungeons, where the boys who had run away a second time were confined—little square cells, where a boy could just lie down in the straw on a blanket, with a little light coming in from above. Here the culprit was confined in solitude day and night, seeing no one but the porter who brought him his bread and water, and who was not allowed to speak to him. Twice a week, he was taken out by the beadle to be whipped, which, Lamb says, was almost a welcome relief. Such were the horrors of these dungeons, that one or two instances occurred of boys going mad and attempting suicide; and this at length caused the system to be abandoned.

The little boy recovered soon from the terrors of his initiation, and he spent at the school eight not unhappy years; a quiet, quaint little figure, among five hundred merry, boisterous lads; stealing about among them, as he says, "with all the self-concentration of a young monk." One of his school-fellows has recorded that, though there was no boy besides himself of the same name in the school, he was never called Lamb, in the usual blunt school-boy style, but always Charles Lamb. The same comrade reports, that on every holiday, in ten minutes after the school was dismissed, he was in the Temple garden, where his parents lived, or reading in a great closet full of books, or playing on the terrace by the river. At fifteen, when he had been eight years at school, his acquirements would have given him a chance of going to Oxford, but for a slight stammer sufficient to prevent his becoming a clergyman—the destiny of all Blue-coat scholars sent to the University.

This exquisite genius passed thirty years of his life as a clerk; first in the employment of the South Sea Company, and afterward in the accountants' office of the East India Company; beginning with a salary of a few pounds a year, which was increased, from time to time, to seven hundred.

A frightful tragedy cast a dark shadow over his life. Both in his sister and in himself there was a tendency to insanity, and during his twentieth year both of them became insane, and he was confined in a mad-house for six weeks. He never again lost his reason; but his sister, during the whole of a long life, was subject to fits of madness. In one of these paroxysms, which occurred soon after the release of her brother Charles from the asylum, she seized a knife and plunged it into the body of her mother, inflicting a wound of which she died. Charles rushed into the apartment only to witness as horrible a spectacle as ever greeted mortal eyes—his mother bleeding upon the floor, and his sister still holding the bloody knife with which the wound had been given. He snatched the knife from her hands, and summoned assistance. The coroner's jury pronounced her insane, and she was formally confided by the proper court to the custody and care of her brother. He accepted the trust, and dedicated his whole existence to performing the duties growing out of it, giving up all hope of marrying a young lady to whom he was attached. Fortunately the attacks of her malady were always preceded by some premonitory symptoms which she could recognize. Whenever she received the warning, she and her brother used to go together to an asylum, and there both would remain until she was well enough to return home.

"I am wedded, Coleridge," he wrote to his friend, soon after the dreadful tragedy, "to the fortunes of my sister and my poor old father."

His father died soon after, but his sister outlived him thirteen years, surviving to 1847, when she died, aged eighty-two. There never has been recorded a more pleasing or noble instance of fraternal devotion than that of Charles Lamb to this afflicted sister.

The impulse to write was awakened in Lamb's mind by Coleridge, his school-fellow, for whom he had an unbounded admiration and affection. He wrote first in verse, and he produced a few poems which possessed sufficient merit to give him a place among the minor poets of England, a land rich beyond most others in poetical literature. It is, however, as an essayist that he will be known and loved by remote generations. There are many deeper, higher and grander essays than his in the English language; but there are none which give the reader such a ravishing delight. They are a never failing resource to the worn and anxious souls of men.

During his lifetime Lamb had considerable celebrity as a wit; but, like most wits, he uttered few things which have the effect upon the printed page which they did at the moment they were spoken in a gay company. Only a few of his good things are remembered. A young lawyer mentioned to him, one evening, the joyous fact of his having got his first brief. Lamb asked him if he did not exclaim, when he received it:

"Thou great first cause, least understood!"

On a rainy day an old woman asked charity of him. "Ah, sir," said she, "I have seen better days." "So have I, good woman," he replied, as he looked up to the clouds, and put sixpence in her hand.

One evening when a clergyman was among the company at his house, a young man spoke slightingly of the Christian religion—an incivility which Lamb at the time bore in silence. But when the party was breaking up, and the guests were looking for their hats and canes, he said to the youth, "Pray, sir, did you come here in a hat or a turban?"

His brother having written a book upon the duty of humanity, he asked a gentleman connected with the *Times* newspaper to do what he could toward getting it favorably noticed. "But," said Lamb, "don't show it to your housekeeper, for I remember she makes excellent *eel* soup, and the leading points of the book are directed against that very process."

When his friend Coleridge was lecturing upon Shakespeare, he was addicted to making long digressions on subjects remote from the topic of the lecture. One evening Coleridge delivered a long discourse upon Lancaster's mode of punishing boys in his school—wounding their self-love instead of their skins. Lamb whispered, "It is a pity he did not leave this until he got to Henry the Sixth, for then he might say he could not help taking part against the *Lancastrians*."

One of his friends visiting him, with his wife and children, happened in the course of conversation to repeat the old saying, "One fool makes many." "Aye, indeed," said Lamb merrily, pointing to the children, "you have a fine family."

Lamb died in 1834, aged fifty-nine. The best description ever given of his personal appearance was written by Sergeant Talfourd, his executor, and the editor of his correspondence.

"A light frame," says Talfourd, "so fragile that it seemed as if a breath would overthrow it, clad in clerk-like black, was surmounted by a head of form and expression most noble and sweet. His black hair curled crisply about an expanded forehead; his eyes, softly brown, twinkled with varying expression, though the prevalent feeling was sad; and the nose, slightly curved and delicately carved at the nostrils, with the lower outline of the face regularly oval, completed a head which was finely placed on the shoulders, and gave importance, and even dignity, to a diminutive and shadowy stem. Who shall describe his countenance, catch its quivering sweetness, and fix it forever in words? Deep thought, striving with humor; the lines of suffering wreathed into cordial mirth, and a smile of painful sweetness, present an image to the mind it can as little describe as lose."

Such was Charles Lamb, the most *beloved* of all English authors.

Asking a Man for His Wife.

On the twentieth of last March, a man named Bennett Jones, living in Jackson, Miss., wrote to Dr. Dameron, of Memphis, Tenn., requesting the doctor to give him (Jones) his (the doctor's) wife. The reason assigned for the making of this request was, that the wife in question loved Jones better than she loved her husband, and would be happier with him than she ever could be with the doctor. Jones also put in the plea that *he* should be unhappy for life unless the doctor generously granted his request, declared that he would never give up his love for Mrs. D., and hinted his intention of outliving the doctor, if no other way of accomplishing his purpose could be devised. A few weeks after Dr. Dameron received this outrageous letter, he met Jones at the corner of Second and Munroe streets in Memphis, and shot him at sight. He was indicted for murder, and his trial came off a few weeks ago. Jones' letter, asking the doctor for his wife, was put in evidence by the defence; the jury acquitted the prisoner speedily, and the entire community unanimously approved the verdict.

Frightened to Death by a Thunder-Storm.

[From the Albany Evening Post.]

Miss Miles, daughter of Solomon Miles, of Greenbush, was so frightened by the thunder-storm on Wednesday evening, that she died in about fifteen minutes. Miss M. was about sixteen years of age.

THE BACHELOR CRONIES.

BY FRANK J. OTTARSON.

Friend Tom, the crows have tracked your brow
  And Time has bent your frame;
Your step, that was Apollo's, now
  Is just a trifle lame;
The hand that had the vice's grip—
  Your only vice, I know—
Now lets my digits weakly slip
  Your honest fingers through.

But we were boys together, Tom,
  And grew and fought and loved,
And through life's early weather, Tom,
  True heart companions proved;
We played at tops and mumble-pegs,
  We ran away from school,
And often bared our little legs
  For duck eggs in the pool.

You stuck to me like teasels, Tom;
  For you this arm would fight;
We 'd hooping-cough and measles, Tom,
  Together, as was right;
Were whipped by the same teacher, Tom;
  Both loved the self-same maid;
Were lectured by one preacher, Tom,
  And went to the same trade.

Together joined our purses, Tom;
  Together shared life through;
We bet on the same horses, Tom;
  Alike we voted too.
We should have married sisters, Tom,
  But each the mitten won;
Perhaps it saved us blisters, Tom,
  This going life alone.

Thus hand in hand we wandered, Tom,
  As twins in soul should do;
The same life problems pondered, Tom,
  The same things doubted too.
We 've tried to live like men, Tom,
  And ever do the right;
Of course we 've erred, but then, Tom,
  'Twas want of inner light.

We know a little valley, Tom,
  Down in the willow grove:
When Time shall utter "tally," Tom,
  And we are called above,
There, side by side, we 'll slumber, Tom,
  In reverent hope for grace,
Among the chosen number, Tom,
  That see the Master's face.

THE BLACK DOCTOR;

OR, THE

Prophecy of the Voodoo King.

AN HISTORICAL TALE OF THE SPANISH RULE IN LOUISIANA.

By WILLIAM HENRY PECK,
Professor of History in the University of the State of Louisiana.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE FRUIT-SELLER'S REPORT.

"A signal of a thief—of a brother thief," said Perez. "We had the same over yonder in Madrid."

"Shall I admit this one who knocks, Captain?"

"Take a peep at him. There is a hole in the street door. I go with you."

The two men glided one after the other through the shop to the door.

Gomaza tapped on it like a woodpecker, and then put his ear to the hole of which Perez had spoken. The next instant he turned to Perez and whispered:

"I will tell him to call at another time. He probably has something which he wishes to sell or to pawn. It is Baptista—a fruit-seller by day—"

"And a thief by night," said Perez. "Admit him. I want to see him."

"Does he know you, Captain?"

"No—and take care that you do not let him, or any one else, suspect that I am in Cuba, or even alive."

The door was opened; a man glided in; the door was closed and locked instantly, and the three men were soon in the room at the rear of the shop.

The new-comer was the fruit-seller whom Perez had ordered to follow the Senor. Three or four hours had passed since then.

Perez had resumed that dingy bandage which concealed the hideousness of his face.

"Well," said he to Baptista. "What about the Senor with the cane?"

Baptista made a peculiar gesture. Perez made another.

By this exchange of gestures these two men recognized in each other men high in the ranks of criminals.

"The Senor with the cane," said Baptista, "arrived yesterday on the *Magellan*, from Spain."

"I know that."

"He is a Russian."

"I know that."

"He was in Havana about twelve years ago."

"I suspected that."

"He was then in search of some person styled by him and his agents—one of whom was with the money-broker Samuels—'The Living Cross of Saint Andrew.'"

"What proof?"

"Since I saw you," replied the fruit-seller, "I have seen and spoken with one of our society. That man is a clerk in the court of Judicial Records. The Senor with the cane went without pause from this shop to the office of the Chief Clerk of the Judicial Records. I followed him. I made a sign to my friend, who has a position in that office. Then I lounged in the corridor, as if desiring to sell fruit. After a time, my friend came to me. He whispered:

"'The Senor with the crooked cane is an old acquaintance of mine—that is, I recognize him as one of two Russians who came into the office with the money-broker, Samuels, about twelve years ago; about six months after Sancho Perez was sent to the mines of Almeida. The Senor speaks Spanish perfectly now. He did not twelve years ago. He, his companion and Samuels came then to examine the records of the trial of Sancho Perez. I remember the matter perfectly, for I gave them my assistance. They seemed then to be in search of a clue by means of which they might be led to discover the even yet mysterious connection of the unknown Isadora Raymundo, and a person they called the Living Cross of St. Andrew, with the arrest of Sancho Perez. This Senor is now examining again the records of the trial of Sancho Perez. He has also asked me a few questions concerning Isadora Raymundo. Of course you know I could give him no information. More than this Senor have tried in vain to find Isadora Raymundo.'"

"What did your friend mean by that?" asked Perez.

"He meant, that after Captain Perez was condemned, we wild ones of Havana swore to kill this Isadora Raymundo, if ever we should learn who that person was. Sancho Perez was one of our chiefs, though that did not leak out even at his trial. It was well for Isadora Raymundo—whoever that was—that he or she did not come forward when the Captain-General offered to that person pardon for forging the order of arrest."

"Why?"

"A hundred daggers would have sought to avenge Sancho Perez. Even had Isadora Raymundo proved to be a grandee of Spain, or the wife of a grandee—and the captain was a great favorite among the ladies—our daggers would have avenged the betrayal of one of the most valued of our secret chiefs."

"Those daggers are yet as ready to avenge Sancho Perez?" asked the convict.

"As ready to-day as they were twelve years ago. The arrest of Sancho Perez was a great loss to us who are called thieves and brigands. Besides, the first law of our society is, 'Death to all traitors!' We did not believe that Sancho Perez killed Angelos Rio. It did not matter if he did, for Rio had withdrawn from our society."

"And you of Havana, what thought you of this Isadora Raymundo?" asked Perez.

"That Isadora Raymundo was the assumed name of a man who did not know much of the secrets of our societies; that he was a government official; that the story that a woman, calling herself Isadora Raymundo, and obtaining by fraud the official signature of the Captain-General, was all false; that the spy or traitor, afterward and still spoken of among us under the name of I. R., invented that story as a shield against detection. In brief, we believe that Captain Perez was arrested upon a false charge, simply to give the government an excellent opportunity to bring other and merely suspected charges against him and his men; and we believe that I. R. may comprehend several men."

"You are not of the belief that Isadora Raymundo, or I. R., was a personal enemy of Sancho Perez?" asked the convict.

"Not at all. But an enemy, or a clique of enemies, of what the law calls crime."

"And you, Gomaza?"

"Oh, I have already told you my belief, my friend," replied the pawnbroker, careful not to give a hint of the convict's identity. "Those two bulls I mentioned were goring at each other. Perez was a fence between them, and they butted him out of the way. I think the same two bulls are yet trying to get at each other—or that one is eager to gore the other, while the other flees or hides. And I say again, we brigands—as some call us—are simply toads in the pasture, and will do well to keep out of the way."

"Diablos! I will be the lion to tear the throats of your bulls!" exclaimed Perez. "Ha! Baptista! I am all that is left of Sancho Perez since the bulls of Gomaza trampled me into the mud!"

"Perez! Sancho Perez! Impossible!" cried the fruit-seller.

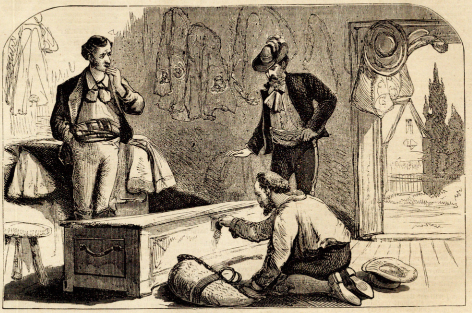
"Oh, my face is not so handsome as it was, and you would not recognize that. But ask Gomaza," said Perez, without uncovering his face.

"It is he, Baptista," affirmed the pawnbroker.

The fruit-seller still looked very incredulous, and replied:

"We have received certain tidings from Spain, and it is undoubtedly true that Captain Perez is dead."

"Diablos! Wait till I whisper something in your ear," said Perez; who then led Baptista apart and whispered in his ear.



THE CHEST OF THE VOODOO DOCTOR UNLOCKED.

The man started violently, grew suddenly very pale, trembled, and stared wildly at the convict.

"Caramba!" said Perez, aloud. "Only Captain Sancho Perez ever knew that, you know, Baptista, or you would have had it whispered in your ear during the twelve years that have passed since you and I met."

Perez had whispered in the ear of the fruit-seller these words:

"Her hair hid the head of the nail that killed her."

To whatever event in the history of the fruit-seller's life these startling words alluded, their whispered utterance in his ear caused him to reply, in a tremulous voice:

"Enough! I know you are Captain Perez—and, as I said, when I recognized only the signal of a chief without knowing who you were, I say again—I serve."

"And I pay," replied Perez, "while you serve. Give Baptista ten doubloons, Gomaza."

"Ten doubloons, Captain! That is too munificent— But certainly," stammered the startled pawnbroker, as Perez darted a terrible glance at him, "though it takes the last piece of gold I have in the shop."

"And now, Baptista," continued Perez, "what more of the Senor with the cane?"

"After he left the office of the Judicial Records," said Baptista, "I followed him to his hotel. He is called there, Don Sebastian. I remained about the hotel long enough to learn that—and more."

"What more?"

"That though he calls himself simply Don Sebastian, and affects to be no more than a private gentleman travelling for pleasure, and with but one servant, that servant is a Russian—"

"You see," here said the pawnbroker, shrugging his shoulders, and spreading his hands. "A flavor of Russia again!"

"Puf! Go on, Baptista," remarked Perez.

"That servant," continued the fruit-seller, "is a Russian, who has been heard to call the Senor Your Highness, in the Russian tongue."

"So," said the pawnbroker. "Did I not say that all this crushing of the captain was because of some feud or plot of some of those great families of Russia? Our Senor with the cane and the prayer in four languages must be a Prince or a Grand Duke, or at least some great Russian noble."

"What care I for that?" replied Perez, with fierce bitterness. "It is as easy to stab a Grand Duke as a peasant, when one is determined to avenge. But who heard this Russian servant call the Senor—that is, Don Sebastian—Your Highness? Who, Baptista, in his hotel, understands Russian?"

"A porter, who is also a member of our brotherhood," replied Baptista. "The same told me that the servant of Don Sebastian had just gone out to see if any vessel was soon to sail for New Orleans."

"For New Orleans!" exclaimed Perez. "That is, it was after the return of Don Sebastian from examining the records of the trial of Sancho Perez, that his servant went forth to inquire about the shipping in the harbor?"

"Yes, Captain."

"It is plain, then, that this quest of the servant is a direct sequence of the discoveries—whatever such may have been—which were made by Don Sebastian during his examination of the records of my trial. Go to your friend the clerk, and obtain immediately for me a minute copy of my trial record," said Perez.

"I will do better than that, Captain. I will bring you the original records themselves," replied the fruit-seller.

He departed. In an hour he was again with Perez and Gomaza, in the little room. He had with him the judicial records of the trial of Sancho Perez.

Perez read all over carefully. Everything had been minutely set down by the *escribano* at the trial. Amid all this mass of legal questioning and cross-questioning, Perez found this record:

"Question—by Don Almo—'What was the name of the negress sold by Sancho Perez to Senora Varlville?'

"Answer—by the sailor Beran—'After Captain Perez had sold her, he returned to the *Doubloon*, and ordered two of the crew to carry the trunk of the negress to the house of Senora Varlville. Before it was taken from the vessel Captain Perez opened it, and examined it. It contained only clothing proper for a negress, and all was quite new. I and Lopez Soares carried the trunk to Senora Varlville's. While there, I heard the Senora call to some one, 'Mercita, your trunk is at the door.' The negress whom Captain Perez had sold, then came to us, and Soares carried the trunk into the house. So I suppose her name was Mercita; though it may have been anything else. She was only a negress; one selected from his slave-women of his mart, I heard, to be sold to Senora Varlville.'"

Further reading of the records showed no second allusion to the sale of the negress; though there was a copy of an advertisement offering a liberal price for a slave able to read, write, keep accounts, and superintend the household of a wealthy lady. This advertisement was dated "New Orleans, Jan. 10th," and to it was appended the name of Ruth Varlville. This advertisement was found posted upon the notice board before the slave mart of Perez, and was proved to have been there for nearly a month before he made that voyage to New Orleans.

As the matter was supposed to be of no importance, and reference to it had been merely incidental, no further notice was taken of it during the trial.

Had Perez divulged that he had sold the negress by orders from the unknown Isadora Raymundo, the presence of the woman and of Madame Varlville, or the legal deposition of the latter, would have been demanded by the court.

But, as we have said, Perez held secret all that he knew of the unsuspected connection between the negress Mercita and the, even to him, unknown Senora Isadora Raymundo.

"Diablos!" thought Perez, after he had read that part of the record which referred to Mercita. "Don Sebastian, having read that name at the end of the prayer, or having recognized the writing as that of some one known to him, or as that of the amanuensis or secretary of some one known to him, and being in search of this Isadora Raymundo—who must be known to him—connects the affair with me and the negress Mercita. Why? Mercita was, and if she be living is, but a negress. But evidently Don Sebastian recognized the hand in which the prayer was written. If Mercita wrote it, she must have written it in Madame Varlville's mansion, on the very day that I was there. If she did not write it, it must have been written by some one in that house during the month of April of that year, and before I was there. But I know that the chirography of the first, second and third letters which I received—two of them signed Isadora Raymundo—was exactly the same as that of the prayer. The name signed to the prayer, Mercita, is of course unknown to Don Sebastian, unless he may know that such was the name of some one connected with a person whom he wishes to find. As he examined the records of my trial twelve years ago, he must then have seen the name Mercita. But it did not attract his attention then. Then it was to him, as to every one, only the incidental mention of the name of a slave. The name, therefore, had nothing to do with his remarkable agitation when he opened that paper. He did not recognize the name, but the writing. Then his attention was drawn of course to the name. Doubtless he has a retentive memory. He reflects. He remembers that he saw that name in connection with the trial of Sancho Perez, of which and of whom he has just been speaking with Gomaza. He hurries to the office of Judicial Records. He examines nothing there except the records of the trial of Sancho Perez. He again finds the name Mercita—the name of the slave sold by Sancho Perez to Madame Ruth Varlville of New Orleans. He already has a clue to something or some one, which he did not have twelve years ago, but which he has just found by chance in the old vest of Sancho Perez; that is, a prayer in four languages, written in a hand which he instantly recognized. On that paper, in a writing unknown to him, are the words, 'New Orleans, April,' and 'Varlville Mansion.' He finds, as he expected, from his memory of his reading the same records twelve years ago, the name of Madame or Senora Ruth Varlville, the name of Mercita, and the name of the city, New Orleans. He at once suspects enough to order his servant to seek immediately a means for visiting New Orleans. He is about to renew a search for some one—a search attempted in vain twelve years ago—a search abandoned in despair for twelve years—a new search, to which he is excited by finding by chance, and recognizing with agitation a scrap of writing. Any one desiring to hide from another, of course would not be so stupid as to sign to anything a name known to the pursuer. Therefore the name Mercita was an assumed name, not even the true name of the slave amanuensis of the unknown Isadora Raymundo; and the latter name is, of course, also a fictitious name. Isadora Raymundo, for certain reasons unknown to me, desired to conceal not only herself, but also her slave amanuensis. Therefore she made me her cat's-paw, and forces me to sell the amanuensis under the assumed name Mercita—and for twelve years this has remained a secret. Don Sebastian, whoever he is, is now again eager in his search for Isadora Raymundo. First move in his game, his examination of the records of the trial of Sancho Perez. Second move, going to New Orleans to find Mercita. Diablos! I must keep pace with this Don Sebastian."

He gave the records to Baptista, and said:

"Return these, Baptista, and keep me well informed of the movements of Don Sebastian."

"Aye, Captain," replied Baptista. "And, by the way, my friend the clerk told me that the Senor copied a part of the records."

"What part, Baptista?"

"This," said the fruit-seller, giving a paper to Perez.

"Diablos! it is as I suspected," thought Perez, as he glanced at the paper.

The paper was a copy of that part of the record which referred to the negress Mercita.

"Our friend the clerk," continued Baptista, "remarked to me that the Senor and his companion made no note of that portion of the records, when they examined them twelve years ago."

"Of course not," thought Perez. "The name and the sale of a slave were a mere nothing then to the Senor; but now he has discovered a connection between Mercita and that which he seeks."

On the morning of the next day the shop of the pawnbroker was open as usual to the public.

Gomaza was behind his counter; but Perez remained in the little back room. At a time when no one except Gomaza was in the shop, the Senor, to be known for a time as Don Sebastian, entered the place.

As has already been intimated, very little of the face of Don Sebastian could be seen. His heavy and luxuriant beard concealed his cheeks, chin and mouth. Even his lower lip was hidden by the profusion of his large and drooping mustache. The large and slouched brim of his hat of felt concealed all the upper part of his face and shadowed his eyes.

His dress was of costly material, dark in hue, and of the fashion then generally worn by Spanish gentlemen.

"Ho! 'tis the Senor again!" thought the pawnbroker, as Don Sebastian came into the shop; and at the same moment he took up a small hammer and began to strike it smartly upon his counter, here and there, as if driving down the heads of nails.

This sudden clatter of iron and wood aroused the instant attention of Sancho Perez, who was at the moment reclining upon the bed of the pawnbroker, half asleep.

"Diablos! that means danger!" thought the convict, as he arose hastily but noiselessly, and put his eye to a hole in the thin board partition that divided the room from the shop. "Caramba! It is the Senor again!"

"What a noise you are making with that rascally hammer, shopman!" said Don Sebastian.

"Ah! pardon!" exclaimed Gomaza, affecting to have just perceived the Senor, and dropping the hammer. "You see, noble Senor, there are several nails whose heads have sprung up from the wood, to tear things. I was hammering them down. But *Ave Maria purissima!* the noble Senor is looking well today! He has again honored my miserable shop with a desire to purchase something?"

"At least he does not come to make foolish wagers," replied Don Sebastian.

"Oh, that is unlucky for me, noble Senor!"

"And lucky for me, no doubt, shopman. I have begun to think you were a rogue yesterday, and accepted the wager on a certainty."

"But by all the—"

"Silence! We will not speak of the matter again," said Don Sebastian haughtily. "It was my proposal, and my loss. I am here today to make another foolish bargain. I wish to purchase from you the chest and all the odds and ends, charms, etc., left by Syphaxo, the Voodoo doctor."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE VOODOO CHEST.

"The chest of old Syphaxo, the negro Voodoo doctor! He wishes to purchase that! And why?" thought Sancho Perez, as he heard the words of Don Sebastian.

The pawnbroker was also amazed. He had ceased to imagine that the Senor was one of those monomaniacs called curiosity hunters, who roam over the world seeking for old odds and ends. But now the expression of a desire to purchase the chest of an old negro, and all the charlatan relics of that negro, caused Gomaza to raise his beetling eyebrows.

"Patriarchs and saints!" thought he. "It cannot be that old Syphaxo was in any way connected with a Russian plot!"

"You said on yesterday," remarked Don Sebastian, "that you had preserved the chest and chattels of that old Voodoo African. I have purchased the cane that was his. Now I have a desire to purchase his chest, and all that it contains."

"Good!" cried Gomaza, rubbing his hands. "Bravo! But to be frank, noble Senor, the chest is simply a large box, I may say, made of stout planks of Spanish cedar. I don't know where old Syphaxo found the chest—Oh!"

The pawnbroker paused so suddenly in what he was saying, to utter this "Oh!" and uttered it so loud, that Don Sebastian stared in surprise at him; while the ambushed Perez muttered:

"Come—what is the matter with him? Why did he pause so suddenly, and cry 'Oh?'"

In fact, the pawnbroker had just remembered where old Syphaxo had found the chest.

"You were speaking of the chest," said the Senor.

"Yes, noble Senor—of the chest," replied Gomaza, in a bewildered way.

"You have it?"

"Oh yes—that is—ahem! Yes, noble Senor—I have it here, under my counter. I will drag it out—to the other end of the shop—around the end of the counter, and so that the noble Senor may see it."

"Very well. Be at it."

"It is very plain," thought Gomaza, "that I am unusually nervous again. It is very warm."

He mopped his face with his handkerchief, and then dragged a large chest from under the counter. Then grasping one of its strong handles, he pulled it to the rear of the shop. There he paused, making a noise and clatter, as if it were a very difficult matter to get the chest around the end of the counter.

That part of the shop was very dark, and a row of second-hand garments suspended on a line just above the end of the counter screened the pawnbroker from the view of Don Sebastian.

"It is the chest that Smolenski concealed the young woman in!" whispered the pawnbroker into the hole in the partition. "Shall I tell him anything of that?"

"Nothing—except what you knew of the chest before I spoke of it to you yesterday," replied the ambushed Perez, in the same tone.

"Shall I aid you there, shopman?" here called out the Senor, who suspected nothing.

"Many thanks, noble Senor! It is all right now," replied the pawnbroker; and as he spoke, he dragged the chest out upon the floor, where his customers usually stood, and near to Don Sebastian.

It was quite a large chest, nearly if not quite six feet long, two and a half wide, and as deep. It was of stout Spanish cedar, and its corners and edges were bound with strips or hoops of iron. It was plain that one end and both sides had once been pierced with many small auger holes, which had been plugged up, the ends of the plugs sawn off quite rudely, and by no means as a good carpenter or tool handler would have done.

The key, large and rusty, was in the lock.

"Open the chest, and let me see what old Syphaxo used in his Voodoo incantations," said Don Sebastian.

"Pardon me, noble Senor," replied Gomaza, "I have a spice of superstition in my mind—especially since that strange coincidence of yesterday."

"What coincidence, shopman?"

"That prophecy of old Syphaxo, noble Senor—that three, and no less than three, were to be present, when the name Isadora Raymundo should be erased from his cane—and—and," added the superstitious pawnbroker, again mopping his face, as if it were steaming with heat, "and that the blood of one of the three should be shed at the same time."

"Diablos! Why does the fool think of that now?" thought the ambushed Perez.

"Come," said the Senor, "I see that you are trying to magnify the worth of this old box, for which and all it contains I will give forty reals."

"Senor, I will admit that the chest contains nothing of any value, except to a Voodoo doctor," said the pawnbroker. "When Syphaxo was dying, he asked me to place the chest near him, and to put into it all that had been used by him—that is, his head-dress, his beads, his earrings, his carved bones and stone idols, and images of clay, and his collection of vials, which were of singular shapes, like frogs, toads, snakes, bugs, lizards, and reptile shapes in general. I believe he had the vials made by a Venetian glass-blower, who chanced to be in Havana at the time. Those vials are in the chest—of all shapes and colors—"

"Open the chest, that I may see, shopman," said the Senor impatiently.

"Noble Senor, I am coming to that," replied Gomaza, bowing. "I put into the chest all, as he desired—"

"But his cane."

"That he did not ask me to put into the chest, as he wished to die, he said, with the sceptre of his ancestors, African kings, in his hands. He did die grasping the cane. But before he died, he, with a last exertion of his failing strength, turned that key, so as to lock his chest; and then slowly and feebly moving the cane in circles over the locked chest, he uttered a prophecy."

"Ah! another prophecy!" said the Senor sarcastically. "I see that you are a very cunning fellow, shopman. You wish to increase the value of this old box of trash, by plastering it with a tradesman's lies. I will give you forty reals for it, and all that is in it; not a cuarto more."

"Noble Senor, I am not lying," replied Gomaza gravely. "He uttered a terrible prophecy, and asked me never to sell the chest without repeating the prophecy to any would-be purchaser of the chest. I promised to do so—somehow I had much fear of that old wizard of an African—and he vowed he would curse me with his dying breath if I refused to so promise, and to haunt me mad if I broke the promise."

"I think you are both a knave and a fool," said the Senor.

"A fool more or less, as it may please the noble Senor, but not a knave," replied Gomaza, bowing. "I will repeat the prophecy of Syphaxo, and then accept the price which the noble Senor has offered."

"Very well. You are an amusing fellow; you make me smile. Few can do that. Come, let me hear the nonsense of the moribund Voodoo doctor."

"Said Syphaxo," continued the pawnbroker, "'This cedar chest shall be the coffin of the man, woman or child that shall first unlock that which I have locked.' He did not say 'I,' but used his African name, which I have forgotten."

"Bosh!" said the Senor, stooping and seizing the handle of the key.

But the key was so firmly fixed in rust, that Don Sebastian in vain tried to turn it.

"It will not turn for me," he said. "Perhaps your fingers are stronger. Take hold."

"Pardon me, noble Senor; I was always remarkable for having very weak fingers," said Gomaza. "I would not turn that key for a million reals," he added in his beard.

"You are a superstitious coward, shopman."

"The noble Senor is pleased to say so."

"Yet you know that at some time you are to die."

"Of course, Senor—but let us not speak of that," replied Gomaza, with a slight shudder.

"And you put faith in the nonsense uttered by an old negro Voodoo doctor, dead long ago?"

"I must say, noble Senor, that I am weak-minded in that respect."

"Caramba! an idiot in his superstitions!" thought the ambushed Perez, who believed in nothing supernatural, except in the spectre of the murdered Angelos Rio.

"But your miserable old juggler of a Voodoo prophet did not say how soon he that should unlock the chest was to die?"

"No, noble Senor."

"And what is the difference, to a dead man, whether he be buried in one box or another, since all coffins are only boxes? He that shall unlock this chest may live fifty years after, and be unharmed in being buried in this chest when he dies. Come, a hundred reals for the chest, if you will unlock it."

"But for showing myself," thought Perez, as he peeped at the scene, "I would unlock the miserable old chest and lie down in it among the humbugs of old Syphaxo! Diablos! what nonsense!"

"I am very weak in the fingers, noble Senor," persisted the superstitious pawnbroker.

"Well, you will not, and I cannot," said the Senor. "But I offer forty reals for the chest, prophecy or no prophecy. Here is the money."

"The chest and all it contains are yours, noble Senor," replied Gomaza, as he received the money from Don Sebastian.

"How long since it was opened, shopman?"

"Not since the Voodoo doctor died, noble Senor—ten years ago."

"I think I saw the shop of an iron-monger somewhere near, shopman."

"One has a shop around the corner, on the next street, noble Senor. But, pardon me, I must remain in my shop."

"Stay then, and guard the chest until I return. Or I may see some stout fellow in the street," said the Senor, leaving the shop.

"It is my opinion," remarked the pawnbroker quite loud, and for the hearing of

Perez, "that the Senor himself was afraid to try very hard to open it! Eh, Captain?"

"Go to the door—watch him!" called out Perez.

Gomaza, standing in the street door, replied:

"He is turning the corner."

"Coming back?"

"No—going. Now he is out of sight."

"Good! Watch!" exclaimed Perez, entering the shop from the rear room.

"Oh, what are you about to do? Take care," cried the pawnbroker.

"Puf! You are a coward, and so is the Senor. I want to have the first peep into the chest," replied Perez. "Watch the street, and if you see any one coming call out."

As he spoke Perez grasped the handle of the large key, gave it a wrench with his powerful gripe, and in an instant had the chest open.

"He is the first to unlock it," thought Gomaza, grinning both with delight and superstitious terror.

In fact, the pawnbroker almost expected to see the black ghost of the grisly old Voodoo king rise in wrath from the violated chest.

"Now," continued Gomaza internally, "if the prophecy of old Syphaxo come true, that chest is to be the coffin of Captain Sancho Perez. As for me, may I never be buried in a box which has doubtless been the haunt and home and hiding-place of a million African devils, imps and Voodoo spirits."

"Watch, there!" called out Perez, who was busy in examining the contents of the chest.

"Oh, have no fear, my friend! I am as vigilant as a hawk."

"Puf! there is nothing in this chest which I did not use to see in the possession of that old fraud Syphaxo," growled Perez. "Bottles, bones, vials, stones, clay images, dried snakes and reptiles, wooden idols, a few sticks and strings of beads, feathers, and the like. Puf! a most mouldy smell. Diablos! what can our Senor want or do with these things? I say, Gomaza?"

"Aye, Captain?" replied the pawnbroker from the door.

"You did not tell me till just now that you had the chest in which Paul Smolenski concealed the divine Angelique."

"In fact, that had slipped my memory, Captain. And I am not sure that it is. I merely surmised that. But the Senor turns the corner, on his return."

"Diablos! I relock the chest. Do not let him suspect that it has been opened. Caramba! what can he desire to do with it?" growled Perez, as he hurried to his place of ambush and espionage in the rear room.

"I say, Gomaza."

"Aye, Captain. Speak fast. He is not far off."

"Tell him how the chest came to belong to Syphaxo. I am impatient to learn that."

"I will, Captain."

"I say, Gomaza."

"Saints and patriarchs! He is nearly here, and he has a man with him."

"Tell him you found the bank-note No. 13,721 in my old vest—last night. Perhaps he may give you gold—"

"Silence! he's here!" cried the pawnbroker, in a hoarse whisper, and making a speaking trumpet of his hands, as he faced toward Perez for an instant.

The Senor entered the shop the next moment, and after him came a stout, large-handed man in the dingy blouse of an iron-monger.

"Here is the chest I spoke of, my man," said the Senor. "Unlock it, and here are three reals for you."

The man stooped, and in an instant the chest was open.

"Now you may go, my good fellow," said the Senor, paying the man, who then went away.

"He thinks that money easily earned," remarked Gomaza, "but if there be any truth in the matter I told of, noble Senor, I think you have paid for his coffin."

"Turn the things out upon the floor, shopman. I do not care to handle them yet. They need airing. Pah! a mouldy smell. What a collection of trash!"

"Somehow the old Voodoo doctor, or king, or whatever he was, worked wonders by means of these things, noble Senor," replied the pawnbroker, as he emptied the chest, turning it bottom upward to do so. "At least he pretended that all his power to heal or to hurt came through the use of these things. Ah, here is the tin box in which he kept a kind of seed. A wonderful seed, I should say—for I have seen him give a few of them to his intimate friends to chew. They would chew and laugh, and seem to go mad with joy, till all fell as if dead drunk. 'The mad seed' he called it. Poison, noble Senor—throw it away, for only Syphaxo knew how to use it."

"I have seen the seed before," remarked the Senor, who had taken the tin box from the pawnbroker just in time to save its contents. "I know all about the power of these seeds. The plant that produces them grows only in Africa, or on some of the islands of the African seas. What is that that you are examining so closely, shopman?"

Something that had been hidden for twelve years had been dislodged from its hiding-place by the thumps which the pawnbroker had dealt vigorously on the bottom of the chest.

Its glitter amid the mass of Syphaxo's dingy and dusty Voodoo treasures caught the eye of Gomaza, and he had picked it up, and was examining it when the Senor spoke.

"Oh, it is nothing—an old glass button in a copper ring, noble Senor."

"Liar!" said Don Sebastian, whose keen eyes had caught the brilliant sheen of a gem, or who believed so. "Give it to me. I purchased the chest, and all it contained. Give it to me. It may be that old Syphaxo owned a diamond."

"Oh, of course the ring is yours, noble Senor," said the pawnbroker, who saw that the Senor was not to be trifled with. And then to himself, "Why did I not look at it more secretly?"

"It is a valuable diamond," said the Senor, as he began to cleanse the hard dust from the ring.

"Ah! The noble Senor is very fortunate!" cried the mortified pawnbroker, digging his finger nails into his palms.

"I know a great deal about gems, shopman," said the Senor. "I am repaid for my loss yesterday."

"Oh! The noble Senor is repaid for his loss of two thousand reals yesterday! So the diamond is worth as much as two thousand reals!" groaned the pawnbroker.

"Diablos!" thought the ambushed and much interested Perez. "What does this mean?"

"The gem is worth nearly if not quite a hundred thousand reals," said the Senor, who had now fully rubbed off all the hardened dust.

"A hundred thousand reals!" gasped the pawnbroker.

"Diablos!" muttered Perez. "The Senor is very lucky—or he is lying, to torment Gomaza."

"Ha! Give me that basin, and soap and water!" suddenly exclaimed Don Sebastian. "Can it be possible! Can it be possible! And to find it here—and now—and in the trash of an old negro Voodoo quack!"

"Caramba! what does he mean by that—and all this calling out, 'Can it be possible!' Oh, he wishes to wash the ring. He must believe that he recognizes something. Diablos!"

The pawnbroker hastened to place before the Senor the articles demanded, and at the same time grew livid with rage at his own bad luck.

"I could have smashed the vile old chest into splinters, and not touched the lock!" he mentally roared. "I could have sawed the rascally old box apart, and not harmed the accursed lock, nor touched the key, and then have examined every crack in the diabolical old receptacle! I ought to have thought—Oh, saints and patriarchs! I ought to have suspected—but how could I—or any one?—blazes and stars of heaven!—that there was a diamond in there worth a hundred thousand reals! Saints of Portugal! a hundred thousand reals! May my fingers be blistered for not being quicker to hide the diamond when I picked it up!"

The pawnbroker was so agitated with his bitter vexation, that he failed to perceive the trembling eagerness with which the Senor continued to examine the ring and its gem.

Or if Gomaza noted this very evident eagerness, he attributed it to that joy which he would have felt had the gem fallen thus suddenly into his own possession.

But the keen eyes of Sancho Perez were upon the Senor, and though, as has been stated, the features of Don Sebastian were almost wholly concealed by hat and beard, the convict perceived a tremulousness which he did not attribute to eager avarice, but to profound surprise.

"Diablos! Can it be a diamond that belonged to Angelique?" thought Perez.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

BUYING A SEWING MACHINE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"Will you get me one, Will.? *Do.* You know I am *so* lonesome while you are absent. And a sewing machine not only will facilitate my work, but be really company for me. Please?"

The pretty little woman put her hand caressingly on her husband's shoulder, and looked so sweetly and pleadingly into his eyes, that he found it no longer possible to withhold the desired promise.

"Yes, yes, you shall have one, May. I—"

She interrupted him, by exclaiming:

"Oh! thank you, Will. When? To-day? This morning? I can scarcely wait to see it, now I know I am to have one. Whose make? Which do *you* think the best? Can I go to look at some?"

"Stop, do, and get your breath. You have asked about a dozen questions. What an impatient little body you are!" said William Lance.

The least bit of a pout, which was not disfiguring to the little mouth, made him sensible he had said something unpleasant, and William hastened to say:

"There—I did not mean, by saying you were impatient, that you were cross, irritable, peevish, or anything of that sort; nothing but the best construction you can put on the word. Now bring back your smiles and listen to me. You will have to restrain your *eagerness*—ah, that's the word—not objectionable, hey?" said William, catching hold of the little chin and kissing away the pout which came again. "I will talk with some of my friends, and get some points concerning the different makes. If I can, I will get Barden to look round with me. He knows all about machines. If I am satisfied on the subject, I will try and get you one up this afternoon. There, now, I guess you can wait that long."

"O yes. You are so good and kind, and I'm *so* delighted!" said May, her face radiant with smiles.

"Oh, May, I want to caution you about one thing!" said William Lance, starting back, as he was about leaving the house. "Don't say anything about our intention of purchasing a machine to any one. If you *do*, we will be overrun, harassed to death, by these agents and their canvassers. They are so sharp; they know every house in town where there is not a machine, and can tell by a single look at a person's face whether he is *thinking* of getting one. There is Clover, who is almost every morning, as I pass, standing at his door. He will see what is on my mind now, sure; and I should not be a bit surprised if he sends one of his chaps either here or to my office, before twelve o'clock; and if he, or any one from his place, is seen entering, you may make up your mind to receiving calls from ten or a dozen others. Now don't be making any inquiries on the subject. I guess, to be on the safe side, you had better stay at home today."

"Very well; I'll do anything to please you. And I should be sure to peep into every window where I saw a sewing machine. But really, William, I think you exaggerating. Just the idea of such a thing!"

"Well, don't try to prove the truth of my words, please," said William, as he closed the door.

He had not been gone half an hour, when May's particular friend, Jennie Swift, came in, and said:

"Hurry on your walking suit, May, and come down town with me; I am going to get some machine needles."

"Indeed I cannot—particularly not into a sewing machine establishment," answered May.

"Why not? What do you mean?" asked Jennie, in surprised tones.

"Why—well, I will tell you: William is going to give me a machine to-day, perhaps. He is going to look about and see which he likes. He says he does not want to be harassed by canvassers. I must not let it be known I've any idea of purchasing one. You ought to hear how he talks about them. So I've promised to stay home to-day, lest I should not be able to resist looking at and inquiring about the merits of different machines," May said.

"Oh, that is it! Well, then I must go. But, dear me! what is the use of his looking around? He can never find any better than the 'Inquiry.' You know what beautiful work ours does. It is perfect in every way. Don't decide until you try the 'Inquiry.' Tell your husband I know as much about sewing machines as anybody, and he had better take my advice on the subject. Good-by, then; I'll come in again when Mr. Lance is home, and we will talk this over," Jennie said.

About noon May was thinking perhaps William might get an hour from the office, and see something about the machines, when the bell sounded, and very soon after the servant came in, saying:

"There's a gentleman wishes to see you. He has got a sewing machine in his wagon."

"Oh, I'm so glad. How soon Will. has sent it!" May exclaimed, going smiling to the door.

"I have a machine here, Madam," began the polite young man, making a graceful bow.

May interrupted whatever else he was about to say, with:

"O yes. It is all right. Bring it in; I am so anxious to see it. Mr. Lance ordered it, I suppose?"

"No, Madam, he has not ordered it yet, but we hope and expect he will allow me to bring it in. You contemplate purchasing some machine, I believe?" said the good looking, pleasant speaking young man.

May hesitated, scarce knowing how to send off such a very polite gentleman, and was really anxious to see the machine work. She demurred a little, but it ended of course in the machine being placed on trial in May's sitting-room. And after the young man had fully impressed on May's mind the great merit of his machine, he left, promising to call the next day and bring a young lady to give her instructions, if she wished, in operating on "The Inquiry." Scarcely had he left, when again the bell sounded, and again May was called to the door, this time to meet an elderly, grave looking old gentleman, who begged leave to be allowed to show her the "Spokes and Wilboy" machine.

She told him she knew nothing about machines. Her husband was going to decide upon one, and as he was not at home, she could not act in the matter.

"Of course not, Madam. Most certainly you are very right. But if you would allow me the privilege and great pleasure of showing you the beauties of our machine, I would be very grateful—"

"But I have the 'Inquiry' here now, on trial," said May.

"Ah! well, then surely you will allow an old man the same pleasure as you did the young one. If you will only give me a few moments, I will prove the advantages of 'The Spokes and Wilboy' over *any* and *all* other machines."

How could she be rude to such a venerable, dignified old man? So in he and his machine went; and after making the most of the best points of his machine, he took his departure.

May was standing between the two machines, turning her gaze from one to the other, when again she heard the bell, and the girl, putting her head in, said:

"Another machine, Madam."

When May approached the door, she found this time her permission to enter was not wanted, for the man was in the act of lifting the machine out of the wagon. A few moments more, and he was beside her, asking:

"Where will you have it, Madam?"

But ere she could answer, William came in, saying:

"You are not much ahead of me. We will take it in here."

Opening the door, and taking hold of one end of the machine table, he backed into the sitting-room, and up against the "Inquiry." Turning quickly, he asked:

"Why, what is this? How came it here?" looking reproachfully at May.

As she was about to answer, his eyes, in seeking a good position for the machine, fell on the other—the "Spokes and Wilboy."

Another look at May, more reproachful than the other, and turning to the man, he said:

"You ask the young lady to come at four o'clock to-morrow afternoon. I should like to be present when she gives instructions."

The man went out, and then William turned to May, saying:

"After all I said to you, to care so little for my caution. You promised me—"

"Oh, Will., indeed I've not been outside of the door. I believe what you said was near the truth. Never even have I asked anybody one word about a machine," May said.

"What! Not been out?" asked William, in surprise.

"No, indeed."

"Well, who has been here—that is, before those fellows with their machines?"

"No one. Oh, I forget—yes, early this morning Jennie came in, and wanted me to go down to the 'Inquiry' agent's. I told her why I could not—that I had promised you—"

"And, of course, that I had promised to get a machine," interrupted William, a little anger manifested in his tone.

"I did not think it was any harm to tell *her*," May said.

"No, nor she to tell Carter, the agent for the 'Inquiry;' and somebody else thought it no harm to give the agent for this other one a chance. But why did you allow them to come in? Why not have sent them off?"

"Oh, Will., I never was rude to anybody in my own house. I don't know how to be. Besides, the first young gentleman was so very polite; and he said that his leaving it was a pleasure—I need not feel at all obliged to purchase it; and if I would only allow him to bring it in just for a few moments, while he explained its merits, then he would remove it immediately, if I wished. But when he pointed out to me its superiority, I thought I had better let it stay until you saw it. He said it was the simplest in construction, more elegant in appearance, and most substantial machinery, of any machine in the market—that they could not begin to supply the demand—"

"All humbuggery. Well, if you believed all this, why did you not send the next fellow off?"

"Oh, Will.! Why, he was such a nice old gentleman, so dignified and pleasant. I could not possibly treat an aged person any way but kindly. And as I had listened to the young one, I felt bound to hear him. Well, he worked on this one, and told me how much lighter and better adapted it was to a lady's use, and that the other was noisy and heavy; how soon I should get tired when using it; that I thought, may be I had better have you see the 'Spokes and Wilboy;' and indeed it does go so gracefully, and scarcely any noise at all."

"Yes. And when I was speaking to Clover about that machine, he told of what a confounded bother the bobbin, or tension, or feed was; and they will all of them tell you the same story of what their machine is, and what others aren't. This I have made up my mind to take is the 'Tinkle and Lamb.' Clover says—I mean Barton says—I don't mind a word those fellows say—that it is an excellent make. He is using one, and his folks like it better than several others they have tried. Now, when these fellows come, get them all off with their machines before I get home, please."

"Oh, I don't know how I shall. Politeness—"

"Very well, just have this room cleared out; for if you listen politely to those confounded bores, you'll have the room full before to-morrow night," snapped William.

"Don't be cross, Will. Indeed I could not help it. But listen. I want to ask you about the machine you like. Has it a double shotted cam? That pleasant young man was telling me about the value of that. I wish you would explain it to me. I could not just understand it," said May, trying to restore William's usual good-humor.

"I've a mind to try the value of a doubled *fist*, and see if it will not *calm* that very agreeable young man. I think some forcible measures should be taken to relieve people from these bores."

"Suppose I consider the young lady you are anxious to be at home to receive, a bore? And perhaps I might resent any ill usage of that young man. Now you had better be discreet," said May, with an arch smile.

William, laughing, followed May to the dining-room. A good dinner soon restored him to amiability.

Jennie Swift came in during the evening, and tried to talk the "Inquiry" into William. But he remained firm in favor of the "Tinkle and Lamb." Between the three May found it impossible to decide.

William again advised her having the room cleared of all furniture, to make room for the others he knew she would be too polite to order off, and was not a bit surprised, when he returned the next afternoon, to find three other machines. May gave her friend Jennie credit for these new additions, saying:

"I know Jennie went, or sent word to the different agencies, just to have a little fun!"

But William declared it was not so. "Nothing but the sharpness and impudence of those canvassers," he said.

"Well, have you decided which of the last three you like the best?" Will. asked.

"No, indeed; I thought *each* perfect until another came."

"Yes, of course; just like the fickleness of woman. I am firm still in my opinion," William said.

"Yes, Will. But if you had heard the gentlemen talk, or rather, if you had heard six good looking young *ladies* talk of the particular merits of the different machines, you might be just as puzzled as I am. I *did* think I would not have 'The Flower,' at any rate. But you see, here it is. The young man really was such a good talker, and for the time made me so sensible of the excellence of his machine, that I almost thought I had found the right one. Then next came 'The Vocal.' That young chap said he would not speak for his machine, it spoke for itself; and he produced a circular, remarking, that I would find that the first people of the country declared in favor of 'The Vocal.' And indeed, Will., it *is* just perfect."

"Well, then, if you had found a perfect one, what did you take another in for?" William asked.

"Dear me, Will., you are just as great a tease as any of the machine men. For the same reason I took you—"

"Took me in? Yes, that's right," interrupted Will., laughing.

"No, you provoking fellow! Married you because I could not say No; and I'm not going to try to. Now I shall just run away from the house for a week, make a visit home, and leave you to send away all the machines but the one you choose to retain."

And, true to her word, May went. Poor William was truly in a pitiable and very embarrassing situation; for the next afternoon, instead of six dreadful bores, came the same number of pleasant and good looking young ladies to give instructions, all meeting at the same time, about four o'clock—after office hours. He listened to each, agreed with all, and so it ended by his hiring a wagon next morning and sending all the machines off, being out of pocket just about three dollars.

When May returned, she was dreadfully disappointed. However, not many days passed before again came a young man, one of the same who had called before, and was perhaps more agreeable than ever—certainly more persevering—and succeeded in making a sale of the Blank machine, I shall call it, because it was not the one of May's husband's choice, or May's either; but the canvasser is a smart young man, and proves that there is nothing like politeness and perseverance.

AFTER.

Beneath the trees that hide the lonely river,
The ancient house is standing as before;
Across the porch the wonted shadows quiver,
And still the roses blossom by the door.

I see a moveless something lying whitely
Beyond the open window of her room;
Across the breast the hands are folded tightly,
And in their marble clutch three lilies bloom.

Those closed eyes are blind to joy and sadness!
Why do I weep? my darling cannot see;
Her ears are deaf alike to grief and gladness,
And now her mute lips cannot speak to me.

But still, beside the cool and lonely river,
The ancient house is standing as before;
Across the porch the wonted shadows quiver,
And still the roses blossom by the door. C. T. R.

NATALIE.

A STORY OF A FORTUNATE ACCIDENT.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

"Natalie," said Mrs. Wilmot Davenport, "I wish you would go down and help Jane. If you would sprinkle and fold the clothes for her, she could be preparing for to-morrow's cooking. We have promised I don't know how many pies and cakes for the picnic."

The girl thus addressed was a sweet-faced, pure-eyed maiden of eighteen, whose tresses of golden brown were swept back from a brow that would have fixed the attention of either sculptor or painter, and whose quiet, soul-born beauty awoke the adoration of the inner as well as of the outer sense. She was a shade paler than she ought to have been; and there were occasional droopings of the eye, and ever and anon the breath came heavier than was its wont, as though there were cares and aches of which she did not tell. She had been engaged in reading, and as her step-mother spoke she laid aside her book, and tried to smile; but the smile would not come.

It was early in the evening, and the astral lamp was lighted upon the centre-table; and upon the opposite side of the table from Natalie sat another young lady of about the same age—a young lady very finely dressed, and wearing fine jewelry,—and she was quite pretty, too; though a single glance would have been sufficient to show an observing, experienced man that she was indebted to external, rather than to internal, blandishment. This young lady was engaged upon a piece of delicate crochet work.

The lady who had addressed Natalie—Mrs. Wilmot Davenport—was of middle-age, and, though slightly over-dressed, she was yet very ladylike in appearance. And she was not without beauty. In fact, she must have been dazzling in her youth; though those who knew her best had never been able to discover any generous warmth of heart in the brightness of her smiles.

Mrs. Wilmot Davenport had been twice widowed. Her first husband had been Chester Bray; and to her, in this union, had been born Julia, the young lady whom we now find crocheting. Her second husband had been Wilmot Davenport, a lawyer of distinction. Mr. Davenport had been a widower at the time of his marriage with her, and Natalie was his child by his first wife; and so Julia Bray and Natalie Davenport were brought together as sisters; and as sisters they might have continued truly to love had Wilmot Davenport continued to live. But Mr. Davenport died within five years of his second marriage, and of this union no children were begotten. He had been an open-handed, generous man—prodigal when led thereto by his sympathies—and at his death he left not a great property. Still he left a comfortable home, and a small sum in bank; and connected with the homestead were several acres of fine land near the centre of the village. This land increased greatly in value after Mr. Davenport's decease, and by selling off portions of it the widow realized sufficient to maintain herself quite respectably.

As was, perhaps, natural, Mrs. Davenport was partial to her own daughter; and through the years of her second widowhood she had sought to make a lady of Julia, leaving drudgery to Natalie. And now that the girls had grown up she eagerly sought to gain for her own daughter an eligible match; and until that had been accomplished she must keep Natalie in the background,—for, whether she acknowledged to herself the fact or not, the impression was with her that in such attractions as spring from the heart and mind the step-daughter was superior.

And of all the young men of her acquaintance Dr. Edmund Cooper was the one whom she would secure if she could. He was not only a picture of manly beauty, based upon perfect health and vigor; but he was an intellectual man, rising rapidly in his profession, and already possessed of material wealth.

As we have said, Natalie laid aside her book, and tried in vain to smile.

"You see," continued Mrs. Davenport, "that Julia is busy. I trust you will go cheerfully."

Tears started to Natalie's eyes at this; but she turned quickly to hide them. Busy! Had not she been busy all the day long with housework, while Julia had been at the piano, and upon the street? And now, for the first time since early morning, she had sat down to rest. But she did not speak of this. She went away to the kitchen, where Jane was glad enough of her blessed companionship.

"My dear child," said Mrs. Davenport, after Natalie had gone, "I expect Doctor Cooper here this evening. I saw him this afternoon, and he told me he should drop in with the hope of securing a partner for the picnic."

"Did he say he would take me?" asked Julia, in a flutter of pleasurable excitement.

"No,—he mentioned no name; but if he finds you here alone he cannot very well choose another."

"O! I am so glad you sent Natalie away. I know she would like to catch the young doctor."

"I am governed by a desire for your good, my child," said the mother, sentimentally; "and I trust you will not let an opportunity pass unimproved. Doctor Cooper is a fine young man."

"I think him perfectly splendid!" cried Julia.

"Then look to him, and make the most of your chance. There is no need that we should conceal our strategy from each other. For more than a month I have managed to keep Natalie out of his way; and I know that he begins to feel that she slights him. This evening's events may seal the conquest. Look your very sweetest, my child, and be very, *very* careful to seem modest and retiring."

And shortly after this Edmund Cooper arrived, and was ushered into the comfortable little drawing-room with many smiles of welcome from the mother, and with a very shy and modest salutation from Julia. He was certainly a man whom any maiden might have been proud to win. One of the chief elements of his success as a physician lay in the genial, happy, encouraging smile, made warm and infectious by the impulse of a great and good heart, which so often illumined his handsome face.

Dr. Cooper sat down, and after a time he inquired for Natalie; and Mrs. Davenport detected that his voice was a shade softer as he pronounced the name.

"Natalie," she said, without the least catching of breath in the falsehood she was about to utter, "is not feeling very well, and has retired."

"She is not ill, I trust."

"O, no." And the step-mother nodded significantly as she added,—"I think she did not wish to see company."

"Then she was expecting callers?" suggested the doctor, with a flutter in his voice.

"I had remarked that *you* would call," answered Mrs. Davenport, with strong emphasis.

Dr. Cooper was left to draw his own conclusions from this; and when he remembered that for a month past Natalie had seemed to avoid him in the same cutting manner, the enforced conclusion was by no means a pleasant one. His visit was not prolonged; and yet, before he left, he offered to escort Julia to the coming picnic. He had told Mrs. Davenport that he was coming for a partner, and to go away now without such an offer would seem a slight upon her daughter, especially as they had given him distinctly to understand that Natalie would not go. Julia accepted the proposal very gladly; and shortly afterward Dr. Cooper took his leave.

Meanwhile Natalie was in the kitchen busily engaged at the sprinkling and folding table, while Jane, the servant, was at work upon the pastry for the coming picnic. While they worked old Peter came in. He was the gardener. His cot stood only a few rods away, and he cared for the gardens of half a dozen families. He was old and lame; but he was intelligent and faithful, and flowers were his beloved children which he nurtured with tenderest care and pride.

Peter lighted his pipe and smoked, and the females chatted pleasantly with him as they worked. Jane had left the buttery, and was engaged in frying doughnuts.

"Look out!" said Peter, whose olfactories were keen. "You'll scorch them doughnuts if ye an't keerful."

And he spoke not without reason, for the fat in the frying kettle was boiling and bubbling, and the crisp cakes were certainly burning. In her haste to remove the kettle to a place less exposed to the fire Jane let the bail slip in her hand, and in her effort to save it the burning fat spilled over upon both her arms, scalding them in a shocking manner. Both Peter and Natalie sprang to her assistance, and when they had borne her to a seat the old man decided that a physician was the first thing to be sought. Natalie suggested the calling of her step-mother; but Peter's negative was prompt and emphatic.

"Goodness mercy!" he cried, "that would be the worst thing ye could do. She'd go crazy. She an't fit to help in such a work. No, no,—do you run for a doctor, my dear, just as quick as ever you can. I'd go, but my poor old legs are dreadful slow. You go, and I'll keep the cold water goin' till the doctor comes."

A beseeching wail from the suffering domestic started Natalie into action, and hastily throwing a light scarf over her head, she hurried out by the back way. As she gained the street she thought which doctor should she call. There were two who lived not far away. Dr. Cooper was the best; but she could not go to him. She dared not. Her heart sank at the very thought. He had avoided her, and slighted her; and a gloom had dropped upon her life in the withdrawing of his smile. No,—she would call Dr. Thomas,—and with that thought she sped on.

Presently, as she passed within the glare of a street lamp, a voice sounded in her ear.—She had overtaken a man on her way, but had not noticed him:

"NATALIE!"

She stopped, and turned, and the hand of Edmund Cooper was laid lightly upon her arm.

"Natalie, whither away so fast? What has happened?"

She could but tell him; and when she had told the story of the accident he turned about to accompany her back.

"You were going for me?" he said.

"I had thought of both you and Doctor Thomas," she answered, evasively.

"And were you called up from your bed to come upon this errand?"

Natalie looked up in surprise.

"Called up from my bed?" she repeated.

"Aye.. Had you not retired?"

"No, sir. I was in the kitchen at work when the accident happened."

"And did your step-mother know where you were?"

"She could hardly have done less, since she herself set me at the work."

"Hold on!" cried Cooper, greatly excited. But directly he added, in a more rational manner,—"We ought not to tarry here. We can talk as we go. There may be other suffering than that of outward scalds and burns. Pardon me, Natalie,—but I will suffer no more for want of a knowledge of the truth. Tell me,—Have you, of your own accord, during these last few weeks, purposely avoided me?"

"Never!" answered the trembling girl. And her look showed her surprise at the question.

"Is it possible that I have been deceived?"

"And you," ventured Natalie, urged on by an impulse which would not be restrained,—"have you not avoided me?"

"Avoided you?"

Dr. Cooper stopped full upon the sidewalk, and looked into his companion's face; and by the pale starlight he could see the rich moisture in her eyes.

"Avoided you?" he repeated. "Natalie, I begin to fathom the mystery. But, ere another plot can come between us, answer me this. If you knew that I had sought you, and had been denied,—if you knew that my heart had been all your own through these long and weary weeks,—if you knew that I had prayed to God that I might be permitted to win you for my own,—if you knew all this?—O! Natalie!"

With a smothered sob she sank upon his bosom, murmuring, as she did so,—

"O, Edmund—it would be heaven!"

"And you will never avoid me?"

"Never."

"You will be mine, and go with me through life—my wife?"

"Yes!"

And then they hurried on, and found the suffering domestic in much pain, but not seriously injured. Dr. Cooper very soon made her comfortable, and promised her that she should not be long an invalid.

As for the occupants of the drawing-room, they knew, as soon as they saw the Doctor and Natalie together, that their game was lost. Yet Mrs. Wilmot Davenport was very gracious when, in answer to Dr. Cooper's formal request, she gave her consent to his union with her step-daughter; and she was the more gracious because neither the Doctor nor Natalie had suffered a hint to drop of their knowledge of her plotting and falsehood. In their great joy they could afford to forget as well as forgive.

Envy.

Envy is a displeasure for some supposed advantage in another. The object of this passion is something more desirable; and although excellency, precisely considered, cannot occasion dislike, yet excellency misplaced may. The envious believes himself eclipsed by the lustre of his neighbor; that which is good in itself becomes an evil to him, and makes him wish it either removed or extinguished. Envy, like a cold poison, benumbs and stupefies; and thus, as if conscious of its own impotence, it folds its arms in despair, and sits cursing in a corner. When it conquers, it is commonly in the dark, by treachery and undermining, by calumny and detraction. Envy is no less foolish than detestable; it is a vice which they say keeps no holiday, but is always working upon its own disquiet.

KIND HEARTS ALWAYS READY.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

O, ye blue waves never weary,
Day and night time as before,
Sprinkling where would else be dreary,
Your white beauty on the shore.
Well it makes the sere sod lighten,
Fruited trees and flowers brighten
In the sire-eyes of the sun,
As if some sent angel's breathing
Evermore was softly wreathing
Use and loveliness in one.

O, ye kind hearts always ready
To give help to sad and poor,
Calmly and sublimely steady
In your love lives evermore,
Is not in such tireless willing
Sweet rewarding gladness thrilling
Through your being's inmost core?
How the waves and you are singing!
How together you are bringing
Joys upon the mortal shore!

Men and women, mission ended,
Memories of it never fade:
In the Heavenly waters, splendid
With the lilies round arrayed,
You will many feet see laving,
Thither aided by blest saving
From the clinch of want and sin.
Helping ones in this life's story,
O the records, O the glory
Where, Christ led, you enter in!

* * *

THE RIVAL SISTERS.

By ELIZA A. DUPUY,

AUTHOR OF THE "EVIL GENIUS," THE "WHITE TERROR," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXVII.

DR. PRESLEY'S CONSULTATION.

When Mrs. Muller uttered her menace, and made her demand of ten thousand dollars out of Hester's fortune, Macon exchanged a meaning glance with Mrs. Blake, and then said:

"I accept your terms in Hester's name, Mrs. Muller; but of course you must wait till she comes into her property, and is in a condition to comply with your demand. I shall recommend her to allow you the annuity, and make its continuance dependent on your own discretion. You must also understand that no further exaction will be tolerated. We have allowed you to fix your own terms, and you must abide by them as inflexibly as we shall."

"Oh! I don't believe in after-claps any more than you do, Doctor, and I'll stand fair by my agreement. I hope it won't be long before Miss Hester can pay me the five hundred, for I'd like to have something in hand, you know."

"I will see about that, Mrs. Muller; you need have no fear as to getting your hush-money; but I am at a loss to know how you are to conceal such an accession of wealth from your too scrupulous husband."

"Well, as to that, Hans is too stupid to inquire much into what doesn't concern him. I've thought it all over, and settled how it's to be fixed. I had an uncle who went to Louisiana to live twenty years ago. We've never heard from him, but Hans knows there was such a person. When the money comes, I'll tell him that Uncle Fitchter is dead, and the annuity was left me by him. It an't likely that he'll go to prying into it, and finding out anything."

"You are a sharp woman, Mrs. Muller, and think of everything. I will have the papers drawn in such a way as will satisfy your husband that Mr. Fitchter was your benefactor. What was his first name, pray?"

"Johann, sir—Johann Fitchter; and a respectable man he was, too. He was a travelling merchant, and as we haven't heard from him for a long time, I suppose he is dead."

"Ah! a peddler. I should not wonder if he has gone the way of all flesh; and I am sure I hope he has, for it would be awkward in him to turn up alive after he had bequeathed you a little fortune."

"I hadn't thought of that, sir; and as you say, it might happen that my uncle is living yet. Perhaps it would be safer for Mrs. Blake to take me with her when she goes away. I'd like to see something of the world, and Hans sha'n't keep me, if I don't choose to stay."

"Why should you imagine that I am going away from this place?" asked Mrs. Blake. "No one has spoken of such an intention."

Mrs. Muller regarded her with a smile of crafty meaning.

"Of course you can't stay here, ma'am. You'll want to be near your own daughter, and she'll hardly be safe in this country. I'm sure that you're thinking now of getting away to the old country, and it's there I'd like to go above all things. I was a baby when my parents came across the water, but I've always had a hankering after the fatherland, as we Germans call it. You'll want some one to look after the young lady as has to be kept *manageable*, and you couldn't trust any one about her as don't know what is necessary to be done to keep her from remembering what it would be dangerous to us to speak of."

A startled glance was exchanged between the two principals, and after a brief pause, Mrs. Blake reluctantly said:

"I suppose that we must accept your terms, since you are in a position to dictate them."

"I'd rather look after the young lady myself, if it's all the same to you. Her life is of some consequence to me, till I get what you've promised me."

"You don't mean to insinuate that there is any danger to her while she is under Dr. Macon's care?" asked Mrs. Blake, in a voice that was slightly tremulous, in spite of her efforts to speak calmly.

"I an't saying nothing against the doctor's skill, Mrs. Blake; but the drug he is giving her is something that ought not to be tampered with. A few drops more might be fatal to her, and a few drops less might prove fatal to us. A person as has judgment ought to be the one to give it to her, and Eunice Barker couldn't be trusted with such a delicate responsibility."

"That is very true," said Macon, "and I think the best thing we can do is to accept Mrs. Muller's offer, and take her with us when we leave. That will not be for some time yet, for a great deal is to be done before any definite plan of travel is agreed on. What do you say, Mrs. Blake?"

She wearily replied:

"Settle it as you think best. I can only submit to what is now inevitable. I am worn out with what I have gone through in the last few hours, and I must have rest. *Rest!* Ah, Heaven, will I ever find it again?"

Mrs. Blake choked down her sobs, and accepted a sedative. She then went to her own apartment; and Macon, after exchanging a few last words with Mrs. Müller, left her to close the house and retire, while he rode slowly and thoughtfully back to the village.

But the perplexities of the day were not over for him. He found Simcox in his office, and the young man, after greeting him rather oddly, said:

"Presley has been here, swearing that he saw Hester Blake on the train with that young Spencer. He was too drunk to listen to my explanation, and you had better find some means of silencing him, or he may set people to talking unpleasantly. He would do anything to injure you."

Macon uttered a savage oath.

"I don't care what he does, the contemptible sot! I dare say he would drive me away from the place if he could; but I am not afraid of him. When he is sober enough to visit a lady, I shall be ready to take him with me to see Hester, and he will then comprehend what a dolt he has been to mistake Miss Landry for her. You may let him know that I wish to consult with him on her condition, for it is a very critical one. Presley is skillful enough to render his opinion valuable, if he can only be kept from making a beast of himself. I must rest many hours to make up for lost time, and I shall not go to the cottage before noon to-morrow."

"Presley will be drunk long before that hour, but early in the day he is straight enough."

"Then make the appointment with him for the next morning. Miss Blake is in no immediate danger, and that will answer as well as to-morrow. I wish the old dullard to be clear enough in his perceptions to see that Hester is still in her mother's house, and thus put an effectual stop to his absurd gossip."

Simcox left him, and Macon, worn out in mind and body, soon fell into a deep and dreamless slumber, in spite of the annoyances through which he had passed within the last few hours.

The next day Simcox informed him that Dr. Presley accepted his invitation to consult with him on Miss Blake's case, and would be ready to accompany him to Elm Cottage on the following morning. Macon only nodded in reply, and then set out to make his daily rounds among his patients.

He did not go to Mrs. Blake's till late in the evening, for he waited in the hope that a letter from Hester would come in the last train due that day. His expectations were not disappointed, for he carried with him when he went the voluminous epistle Hester had written, and also a brief note from Spencer, inclosing a draft for his own fee.

Macon found Mrs. Blake quite restored to composure, and ready for any emergency that might arise. All the hardness of her nature had asserted itself after that violent outburst of anguish, and she was now eager and willing to do all that was necessary to guard against possible detection.

The letters were read, and both were satisfied with their contents, and congratulated each other on the facility with which Hester seemed to carry all before her. But there was one paragraph to which Mrs. Blake referred with some uneasiness. It was that in which the encounter with Dr. Presley was described. Macon told her of his appointed consultation with Presley, and she anxiously asked:

"Will it be quite safe? Is there no danger that—that something may be said by her that may excite his suspicions?"

"It will be easy enough to provide against that. My skill would not be worth much if it did not enable me to throw my patient into a quiescent state, in which she will not care to talk. By the way, how is she to-day? and how does she like the new nurse we have provided for her?"

"She is much better, and insisted on sitting up several hours. She flatly refused to let Mrs. Muller stay in the room with her, and as Eunice seemed sulky at being sent into the kitchen, Mrs. Muller and I agreed that it would be best to let the girl remain with her half the day at least, though she is not to be trusted to give her the medicine. I administered that myself, but she took it very reluctantly."

Macon reflected a few moments, and then said:

"After to-morrow it can be mixed with her food, and she will not detect its presence. Mrs. Muller will prepare what she eats, and I will give her her instructions. I believe it is best, after all, that she is in our confidence. She is intelligent, and I believe reliable."

Mrs. Blake sighed heavily, but she made no reply, and soon afterward Macon went in to see Estelle.

He found her lying back on her pillows, singing softly to herself, and for a moment even his heart was touched with compassion, as he looked on that fair young creature, doomed through his arts to a life of nonentity, ending, in all probability, in a lunatic asylum.

He sat down by the bed, and taking her wrist in his clammy hand, softly said:

"You are better this evening, Miss Hester. I hope you will soon be able to go about again, and be as gay and happy as you were before your illness."

She turned her beautiful eyes, soft and lustrous as those of a gazelle, upon him, and dreamily said:

"I seem to be floating away on billowy clouds, that carry me up, up, up, and I can't keep myself from going toward that beautiful star that flashes and gleams in the distance like the home of the blessed. I wonder if my love is there waiting for me. He was sent away from me, you know; but he is mine, and I am his, though others do not know it. Hush! no one must tell *them*. They forget their own youth, or they would not be so hard with us."

She suddenly burst into her song again—an old ballad which she had probably learned at Raymond's request:

"My love is like the red, red rose
That's newly sprung in June;
My love is like a melody
That's sweetly played in tune.

"That is what he said of me, but it is equally applicable to him. Won't he come to me soon, Doctor?"

Macon cleared his throat to rid his voice of the huskiness that might have betrayed his sympathy.

"Perhaps he will. Who is this lover, of whom you sing and speak so sweetly?"

She put her hand to her head, and pathetically said:

"I—I can't remember his name. Isn't it strange, when I am—"

A sudden expression of fright came into her eyes, and she went on:

"I'll not speak of *that*. We pledged each other to sacred silence, and I will not be the first to break the promise. Who was it that made him go from me? I can't think; I can't remember, and I ought to know all about it. If you are a doctor, why can't you give me something to take away this confusion in my brain? Things come to me in glimpses, and before I can grasp them they flit away again."

"I am giving you remedies," said Macon, trying to speak calmly, "but your mother says that you are unwilling to take them. You know that I can do nothing for you unless you are a docile patient."

"But I did drink what she gave me, though I did not like it. Is she my mother really, Doctor? I did not know that I had a mother, and it seems so strange to have one start up all at once. Isn't it now? I had a father once, and he was very good to me, but that was, Oh, so long ago!"

A tear rolled over her cheek, and she shivered, as if some memory of the fatal events of the last few days had flashed suddenly on her half-dazed mind. If so, it went as suddenly as it came, and she lay pale and panting, with an expression of trouble and doubt in her dark eyes that was infinitely touching.

Macon gently said:

"My dear Hester, it is strange that you do not remember your own mother. She is in deep affliction about you, and you must be very obedient to her wishes, and take all the remedies I order, or your health will never be restored."

With sudden petulance, she asked:

"How can I help taking them, when they force them on me? I am not used to have people make me do things; but I can't help myself now, and you do with me just as you please. It won't always be so though. Somebody that has the right to protect me will come back, and then I'll show you whether I'll submit to be treated like a baby."

"Who is that person? What is he to you?" asked Macon, with sudden earnestness, for a faint suspicion of the truth began to dawn on him, and he grew cold at the thought of what might happen to Hester if anything more than an engagement of marriage existed between Raymond De Lorme and his unfortunate captive.

The petulant expression left Estelle's face, and she laughed with the abandon of a mischievous child, as she asked:

"What would you give to know? That is a secret I am not going to betray. It belongs to him and to me, you know, and it is far too precious to become the property of others. Look! Here is the ring he put upon my finger. It has in it a motto—but I am not going to show it to you. I can't remember the words, but I know what they mean all the same. They are in my heart, if my brain is too weak to recall them."

Macon glanced at the slender hand she held up, and he saw that several plain gold rings adorned it, which he thought he recognized as those once worn by Hester Blake, and he concluded that she had removed all those belonging to the sick girl, and replaced them with her own. If he had examined more closely, he would have seen that a massive circlet worn below the others had never glittered on Hester's finger. When she made the exchange, that was so nearly like one of her own with which some tender associations were connected, that she left it in its place, unconscious that in doing so she surrendered the wedding ring, which, at a future day, it would be so important to herself to possess.

At this moment Eunice came in, bringing some light nourishment she had been in the kitchen preparing for the invalid. Estelle smiled on her, and said to Macon:

"I like *her*, and they wanted the other woman to stay with me. I won't have her, for I don't fancy her at all. This one can't talk and say things to me that I don't understand. *She* told me I was to say I've had a sun-stroke; and if I did not, I would not be allowed to go away when I am well. It is strange that I can remember that, when I can't think of who I am, and what happened before I had this illness. Is it true, that you are going to keep me here if I don't say I've had a sun-stroke?"

She looked wistfully in his eyes as she asked this question, and he felt deeply annoyed with Mrs. Müller for making such a threat. He arose and made way for Eunice to approach the bed, as he said:

"That is all nonsense, and I shall tell Mrs. Müller that she is not to speak to you in that manner. You have had a sun-stroke, you know, and that is why your brain is so confused. As to going away, it won't be long before you will be taken from this place. You will need change of air, and your mother will probably take you on a sea voyage."

"Across the sea! That is where my love has gone. Yes, across 'the sea, the sea, the open sea, the bright, the fresh, the ever free,'" and she broke into song again.

Macon bade her good-night, and went out of the room much depressed, and annoyed by hints which seemed to point to a deeper entanglement than he had dreamed of when he consented to allow his betrothed to assume the dangerous position she now held. What if there had been an actual marriage? Such a complication caused cold drops to burst forth upon his brow, and he ground his teeth in impotent fury.

On the following morning, Mr. Presley presented himself at the appointed hour, and signified his readiness to visit the fair patient at Elm Cottage. He had evidently drank nothing that morning, and for the want of his usual stimulant, he looked wan and wretched.

Macon sharply scanned his face, which was that of a man gifted with more than ordinary intelligence, though marred and bloated by habitual indulgence in his degrading vice. Presley had once been an able and popular physician, and no one knew better than Macon, that when sober he was an accurate judge of every phase of disease.

"Too clear by half," thought Macon, as they rode forth together on that balmy morning. "When he is half-seas-over, I can easily throw dust in his eyes; but if he sees my patient now, he will at once distinguish between the effects of sun-stroke and concussion of the brain: though she is suffering less from the last, than from the effects of my remedies. I must tempt the old fellow to drink from the bottle I have prepared for him."

Macon had arranged to make a call on the way, leaving Dr. Presley in charge of the cab in which they rode. As he alighted he said:

"You look badly this morning, Doctor, and I am afraid you miss your matutinal drink. A small quantity will not hurt you, and you'll find a bottle of bitters in my saddle-bags. I never travel without them, though I seldom touch them myself."

"Thank you; but I believe I would rather abstain till we have made our call at the cottage."

"Very well; just as you please. I shall be detained here a little while, but I will come back to you as soon as possible."

Macon went in, knowing perfectly well what the result would be. He was no sooner gone, than the drunkard's thirst assailed the man who had been told that the means of indulgence were left within his reach. He tried to control himself, but in a few moments after his crafty companion disappeared, the bottle was at his lips; and again and again was it applied to, before the call of twenty minutes was ended.

When Macon entered the cab again, he saw by the unsteady glitter of Presley's eyes that he had taken his advice. He cheerfully said:

"You are better now, sir. I don't object to a small modicum of good brandy occasionally, though too much of it plays the deuce with a fellow."

"It has done worse than that for me," said Presley, in a depressed tone, "yet I can't refrain when the temptation comes in my way. I am afraid you'll find your bottle pretty well exhausted, but its effects won't tell on me before our visit is made."

"We have not far to go now, and you will find the patient in no condition to find out whether you've been drinking or not. She is very ill—so ill that I have no hope of entire recovery. The physical system may react, but the mental equilibrium is destroyed, I sadly fear."

"That will be bad for you, Macon, for it is said that you are sweet on Miss Blake."

"Oh—ah—yes—I know that there is some such gossip, and I did admire her greatly till I saw her cousin. *There* is a woman, sir, for whose sake the world were well lost; wonderfully like Hester Blake, but of finer mould, and—and more captivating than any creature I ever saw. I think I could follow such a girl as Miss Landry to the end of the world. But what is the use of talking such nonsense? *She* would never look at a poor physician like me, though she smiled on me and thanked me sweetly for what I was able to do for her."

"She'd see a deuced ugly mug if she did look at you, old fellow," said Presley, on whom the potent liquid was beginning to tell. "You've got a Hindu's features, with the complexion of a Digger Indian. Fact, you know; so you needn't look uglier about it than Nature made you. I've often wondered how Hester Blake could let you make love to her, and here you are hinting at unfaithfulness to her. It's—it's incomprehensible—"

The last word was uttered with such evident effort that Macon smiled grimly, and said:

"I can *talk*, Doctor, if I am not one of Nature's favorites, and women are won through the ear oftener than through the eye. As to Miss Blake, she will never again be in a condition to lament my inconstancy. But here we are at the gate, and there is Mrs. Blake ready to receive us."

It took a great deal of brandy to render the steps of Presley unsteady, and he moved forward on the pathway to the house as readily as his companion. He greeted Mrs. Blake with extreme courtesy, and expressed his sympathy for her affliction in well chosen language. She looked depressed and wretched enough to show him that she had suffered much, and he thought that after all his doubts, the sick girl must be really her daughter.

Mrs. Blake reported Estelle as decidedly worse, and she expressed to Presley the hope that he could suggest something to benefit her.

The three went into the darkened room in which the poor girl lay, apparently breathing, and no more. She was colorless as the linen against which her face rested, and her breath came in fluttering gasps from her pallid lips.

When Presley saw her, he uttered an exclamation of astonishment, and peered closely at the fair face.

"By Jove! there's a pair of 'em! I did not believe two people could be so much alike. I could have sworn, Mrs. Blake, that I saw your daughter running off with that strange young man from Boston, but I give it up now. There she lies, sure enough, and I've made a fool of myself telling people that I was sure I saw her on the train. I beg your pardon, Madam; but you know I am a blunt fellow, and I'm not always clear in the upper region."

"I am sorry, Doctor, that you have made my poor girl the subject of gossip," replied Mrs. Blake with dignity; "and I request that you will repair the injury you have done her, in setting such reports afloat. Dear child! I am afraid she will never again revive sufficiently to understand anything; but if she should, she would be inexpressibly shocked to hear that she was even suspected of an elopement with a person who had been known to her but a few hours."

The confined air in the sick-room caused the head of the doctor to reel uncomfortably, and his naturally fine sense was dulled almost to obtuseness by the skillfully prepared potations he had lately imbibed. With a foolish leer he pointed to his head, and said:

"Muddled—fuddled—addled—that is what my brains are, Mrs. Blake. They are seethed in alcohol—drowned in aqua vitæ. Water of life, indeed! water of death, rather; and yet I *will* swallow the poisonous stuff whenever I get a chance. But I—I'm all right now, Ma'am; only a taste this morning; and I'll see what can be done for this pretty creature here."

He took the hand of Estelle in his own; it felt limp and cold, and he dropped it and sunk down on the chair that was placed near the bed.

"I—I'm sick myself—t-t-take me out of this close room. And—and, Ma-d-a-m, you'd bet-t-ter not co-co-come to hear wh-wh-what I've to-to say to M-m-macon."

Presley's sympathies, combined with the liquor he had drank, proved too much for him. He was led from the room by Macon, and after walking to and fro in front of the house a few moments, his brain cleared sufficiently to remember why he had been brought there. He pathetically said:

"You ought not to have given me the fire water, Macon, if you wanted a correct diagnosis of that poor girl's disease. I can't help drinking it when I know it's in my reach, and in my present condition my opinion is worth nothing—nothing."

"Pardon me, Doctor; I had no idea, when I offered you a taste of my bitters, that you would take so much as to unfit you for consultation. As to Miss Blake's condition, my mind is clearly made up; and even if we had differed, I should have adhered to my own views. My chief object in bringing you hither was to prove to you that Hester is still under her mother's protection. I had heard of the injurious stories concerning her which you have set afloat in town, and I wished you to see with your own eyes that she is ill, almost unto death, in her own home."

"I—I have been a beast. I'll go back to the village and contradict every word I've said. Poor thing! poor girl! struck down in her youth and beauty in this dreadful manner! It's bad enough as it is, without having her talked of by a set of gossipping tongues."

"Thank you, Presley; that will be but right. As we drive to town, I will explain to you the course of treatment adopted by me, and I think you will approve it. This is certainly the worst case of sun-stroke I have ever seen."

"The mother must be a fool to let a delicate creature like that expose herself in such a manner as to bring on such an attack," growled Presley.

"Mrs. Blake is very far from that, but she had so much to attend to, that she is excusable."

Thus ended the visit to Estelle, which might have had such different results if Dr. Presley had remained sober. When he again mingled among his friends, he spoke of Hester Blake so feelingly, that great sympathy was aroused in her favor.

The consequence was, that the cottage became a focus of interest, and every lady who claimed the slightest acquaintance with Mrs. Blake came out to call, and inquire how the invalid was progressing.

A few were permitted to see her, and even those who had known Hester well did not doubt that she was lying before them, stricken down by illness that baffled the skill of her physician.

After that dangerous interview in which Presley had played so contemptible a part, Estelle was permitted slowly to regain consciousness, though her memory was held in abeyance by the daily use of the drug Macon ordered to be mingled with her food in such infinitesimal quantities that its presence was not detected.

She accepted Mrs. Blake as her mother, and would have lavished on her much fondness, if she had not shrunk from her caresses, and repelled them in every way, when others were not by to observe her.

The sweetness of nature possessed by this unfortunate girl showed itself in every act of her life, although her mind was under so sad a cloud. She never spoke in a harsh or excited manner, but accepted all that was done for her with a grace that made her charming, in spite of the eclipse under which she so meekly suffered.

When she regained her bodily strength she was permitted to wander through the grounds around the cottage, with Eunice Barker for her companion; and much compassion was felt, by those who occasionally saw her, for Mrs. Blake's demented daughter.

A strong attachment grew up between Estelle and the dumb girl, and she speedily learned to communicate with Eunice in such a way that a perfect understanding seemed to be established between them. They gathered flowers, hunted birds'-nests, and through the bright fall weather lived an Arcadian life in the open air. Through all, Estelle warbled, "My love is like the red, red rose," but she did not again refer to her lover, though Macon took infinite pains to induce her to speak of him.

She often sat dreamily turning her wedding ring upon her finger, but who had placed it there she seemed to have forgotten utterly.

Mrs. Blake began to grow impatient at not hearing from Hester, for letters had been sent to New York, to a friend of Macon's, to be forwarded to New Orleans under cover to Merton & Co., and sufficient time had elapsed to allow replies to come.

When they did arrive at last, they fell as a thunderbolt in the quiet and monotonous household.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

HESTER IN NEW ORLEANS.

The voyage to New Orleans was prosperous, for no storm cloud arose to threaten danger, and every day the travellers passed the greater portion of the time on deck.

To Marion Oliver and Herbert, this was a charming interlude in their lives, to be looked back on hereafter as a golden dream of perfect contentment. Away from busy life and its perplexities, floating on a calm sea with the brightest of suns overhead, with sanguine hopes for the future and perfect love for the present, what more could they ask for happiness?

They were not unwise enough to ask for more, for what they had sufficed them; and if the voyage could have been indefinitely prolonged, I think those two inconsiderate young people would have been perfectly contented to float between sea and sky for as interminable a period as did the Ancient Mariner, though under far different auspices.

Hester showed perfect tact in leaving them much together, for in their position she knew that a third person is always an intruder. She had much to think of herself, that was far more interesting and important to her than the love idyl acting before her, and she would ensconce herself in a safe and pleasant spot, with a book for a companion, though in truth she scarcely referred to its pages.

Her own life, and her own future, were subjects of far greater interest to her at this period, than the most exciting romance. So far, all had gone so smoothly with her, that she began to fear that fate was luring her on, only the more surely to destroy her.

She had one great dread in her heart: What would Macon do when he found that she was lost to him forever? That only as Raymond De Lorme's wife could she retain the position it would now be ruin to them all to relinquish. *She* knew better than any one else how desperately that man was attached to her, and she also knew that he had in his nature a wild instinct of vengeance, which he might be capable of gratifying at any cost to himself, or to her, when he was made aware of the barrier that had arisen between them.

Hester tried to put this thought from her, but it would come back again and again, and even her dreams at night were full of that repulsive being who thought he had bound her securely to himself, by so unscrupulously consenting to serve her interests. She began to fear him intensely, but her hatred toward him outstripped even her dread, and if Macon could have seen the small hands clenched, the teeth firmly set together, when his image arose before her in the shape of an avenger, he might have gained a more correct idea of his idol's character than all their previous intercourse had given him.

On a bright evening in September the good ship reached the Balize, and on the following day she was safely anchored near the levee at New Orleans. The city was healthy, as there had been no epidemic there that summer, and our party of travellers took rooms at the St. Charles till the day for the departure of the regular packet for the coast. Such is the name given to the beautifully improved lowlands lying on either side of the Mississippi below Bayou Sara, and Le Bocage was situated a few miles above Baton Rouge.

Hester was rejoiced at the delay, as it afforded her the opportunity to send one of the waiters at the hotel to Merton & Co. to inquire for her letters. She sent a written order for them, but they were brought to her by one of the clerks of the establishment, who explained that the letters had been forwarded to them from New York, with injunctions to retain them till called for in person by the lady to whom they were addressed. Under these circumstances, Mr. Merton had judged it best to send one of his own people with them, to satisfy himself that no mistake was made.

In reply to this, Hester haughtily said:

"I believe there can be no doubt, sir, that I am the person to whom this package is addressed, and there can be no difficulty in assuring yourself that I am the daughter of Mr. Armand Landry. I should have sent the friend under whose care I travelled South to claim them for me, but he has such pressing business of his own to attend to, that I did not like to trouble him."

"It is all right, Miss Landry. I need not inquire about you of any one, for you are enough like your father to be recognized anywhere as his daughter. Mr. Merton is very particular, and he thought it best to send me with them; that is all."

Hester smiled graciously on him now, and said:

"I dare say Mr. Merton is quite right to be methodical. Other letters may come to me through your house, and if they do, I shall be glad to have them forwarded to me at Baton Rouge, which is the nearest post-office to Le Bocage."

"I will attend to it myself, Miss Landry," said the polite clerk, and bowed himself out of the private parlor just as Mrs. Oliver was entering it. She bent her head slightly to him in passing, though she looked much surprised at finding a stranger in conference with her new friend—for friends they now were, in spite of Marion's intuitions. It was impossible to resist the charm of Hester Blake's manner when she wished to please, and she had spared no pains, in her daily association with the lovers, to attach them both to her and her interests.

In addition to what Raymond De Lorme had done for Spencer, she made such liberal proffers of assistance as would enable him to buy out a half interest in the commission house he expected to enter, in place of a third, as had been originally proposed; and she insisted on doubling the salary Mrs. Oliver named as the amount that had been paid her by Mrs. De Lorme, as governess to her children. Of course such liberality must have its influence, and in addition to this, there was a gracious sweetness of deportment, without a tinge of patronage, which was very captivating; for Hester had tact enough to see that the suspicion of it, in the early days of their acquaintance, had prevented Mrs. Oliver from being quite cordial with her.

She claimed Marion as her dearest friend, and treated her in every respect as if she had been her sister. When Mrs. Oliver came in now, a faint shock thrilled through her veins, as she saw Hester gathering up a package which she had evidently received from this stranger, and was seemingly anxious to conceal from her. She had no wish to pry into what did not concern her, so she turned to a window, and looked vaguely into the street below, wondering if Hester would explain who the strange young man was, and what had been his business with her.

She caught a glimpse of Mrs. Oliver's face, and with the prescience with which she seemed to be gifted, Hester understood what was passing in her mind. She drew near her friend, laid her hand caressingly over her shoulder, and softly asked:

"Why do you turn away from me, Marion? Do you think that I have any secrets from you? Fie! my dearest; why will you misjudge me so? You whom I love so entirely—whose good opinion I value so highly. This thick letter is from one of my school friends who has made an unfortunate marriage. She writes to me to assist her, knowing that I will gladly do so; and not knowing my address, she sent it to a commission house here, to be forwarded to me at Le Bocage, for she had learned through my aunt that I had determined to return to Louisiana. Mr. Merton, the merchant, saw my name among the arrivals in the morning paper, and, as the package had just come to hand, he was polite enough to send it around by one of his clerks. I have merely glanced over it, but poor Carrie Linley seems in great need of a friend. I must lose no time in writing to the dear girl, and I will get Herbert to post my reply. How pleasant it is to be rich enough to do as one pleases, without regard to dollars and cents."

Marion was seized with sudden remorse for the suspicion she had allowed to enter her mind, after all their pleasant intercourse while on the sea. She thought she had put aside all such fancies, and here she was going back, at a moment's warning, to that old, uncomfortable state of feeling which had haunted her as a nightmare in the first days of her acquaintance with Hester. She almost deprecatingly said:

"Dear Estelle, I have no right to intrude on your confidence, and I am sorry that you thought it necessary to explain to me your friend's unfortunate position. If it is pleasant to have the power to do a generous action, it is far better to be liberal enough to be always ready to respond to the claims of the needy, as I have every reason to know that you are."

"You are a charming flatterer, Marion. Wealth such as has fallen into my hands should be used for the benefit of others, as well as for my own gratification. To give freely of my superfluity is not much to do, and I take no credit to myself for being generous. It is simply a duty, and one which I hope to perform creditably."

Fine sentiments came as freely to the lips of Hester as the falsehoods by which she was compelled daily and hourly to sustain the uncertain position she held. Marion no longer questioned their genuineness, but accepted them as the utterances of a noble, high-toned nature, to which she had not at first done justice. In her zeal to atone for this, she went a little beyond her own belief when she said:

"It is a duty you will perform like the angel of goodness you are, Estelle. But here comes Herbert; he is looking up from the street, and smiling as if he is satisfied with his day's work."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

* * *

—Clouds are the vail behind which the face of day coquettishly hides itself, to enhance its beauty.

CONSCIENCE.

BY DR. C. D. GARDETTE.

"Conscience makes cowards of us all!" I cry
Not so! nor care by whom this thing was writ,
Nor heed that, through the centuries gone by,
All cowards have for truth accepted it.

When in a human heart some thought of ill
Like a foul weed takes unexpected root,
And spreads, and springs, and burgeons there, until
It shows rank promise of unwholesome fruit,

If haply, ere this fruit be ripe to fall
Upon the earth as an abhorrent deed,
Is he a coward whom the imperious call
Of Conscience bids pluck forth the noisome weed?

Which is the coward? He who fears the Wrong
And does the Right, though Wrong the most allure;
Or he who lulls his Conscience with the song
Of some to-morrow which all sores shall cure?

Conscience make cowards! Why, 'tis braver then
To fly than fight, to lie than tell the truth;
To rob than give; to sin with many men
Than to be virtuous with the few, forsooth!

All this is fustian! He who dare obey
His Conscience hath a courage sterner far,
And nobler, and more difficult, than they
Who calmly face the fiercest front of war!

THE SILVER RING.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

There stood in Berkshire, England, far out upon a quiet country road, a little inn, which the wooden sign swinging at the door declared to be known as "The Magpie's Nest."

It had been thus named because of the number of magpies in the neighborhood. And straight before the door stood an oak-tree a century old, among whose uppermost branches, year in and year out, always hung a magpie's nest, to which the country people believed that the same old magpies returned regularly.

No very elegant entertainment was offered at the Magpie's Nest for either man or beast, but its patrons thought the ale good, and then it was served to them by the most charming, rosy-cheeked little bar-maid, who wore a cap with bright ribbons, and had a waist that could have been spanned by two hands—a well-behaved little maid also, who resented too much freedom by a box on the ear, and who was known by the rector of the parish church to have been the best girl in his Sabbath school. So, though she was a poor orphan, and had only her little meed of wages, Betty might have married many a stout young farmer. However, she refused them all, and kept on with her duties at the Magpie's Nest until the son of her master, coming home from India, where he had served as a soldier for several years, fell in love with her, and offered her his hand and heart. Betty did not prove unkind. The innkeeping father was willing enough to secure his handy Betty for a permanent assistant. And amid the chattering of the magpies, Betty and John exchanged their vows under the nest-hung oak-tree one bright afternoon, and John put upon her finger a thick silver ring, which he had obtained abroad, perhaps by purchase, perhaps by gift, perhaps as soldiers obtain many things in time of war.

It was not a costly gift—to our eyes it would not be a beautiful one—but Betty valued it highly. She kept it polished to perfection, and wore it with great pride on high days and holidays; but though she loved John, and looked forward to her wedding-day with joy, she would not alter the bright, coquettish manner which had always belonged to her. She joked with the farmers, flung them back repartee for repartee, and even gave them those bright glances which John the soldier thought should be only given to himself. So John grew jealous, and being a moody sort of man, said nothing about it.

It never entered Betty's mind that the very manner which had once enchanted John should now offend him, and she herself grew angry with her lover for his scowls and sulkiness.

Therefore, when a young Frenchman from Marseilles, black-eyed, black-haired, and as polite in his manners as Frenchmen usually are, chanced, in the course of a business journey, to stop at "the Magpie's Nest," she felt that he really would be a fine example for surly John Leaf, and was amiable to him to a degree that might have made a less jealous man angry. Then indeed John Leaf spoke out, and Betty discovered the secret of his ill-temper. Her pride being flattered thereby, she forgave him, and retired on Saturday night with the firm intention of winning back John's smiles on the morrow, her holiday, when she would go to church in her best attire and charm his heart from him over again, as he walked by her side. What woman ever had any design on a man's heart, ever desired to win from him any favor or any gift, that she did not bethink her of all her finery? Before Betty slept, she took from her trunk her Scotch plaid dress, her fringed shawl, her blue ribboned cap, her Sunday shoes, and her silver ring, and having given the latter an extra polish, laid them where they would meet her eyes the first thing next morning.

John Leaf, sulking in his room under the garret eaves, had no thought of this. Those slow natures do not forget and forgive in a hurry, any more than they do anything else.

The morning sun, shining aslant against the inn's wall, aroused Betty with his first rays. She rubbed her eyes, opened them, put her fat little feet out upon the floor, knelt down and said her simple prayer, and then flew to the glass. It was only a crooked thing, with a flaw in it, and a rough oaken frame, but it was sufficient to make her happy. She braided her hair, put on her cap, buttoned her dress, tied about her throat the gay neck ribbon, laced her shoes geometrically, and then looked for her ring. It was gone.

She knew the very spot upon the red heart-shaped pin-cushion into which she had thrust the needle over which the silver ring had been hung. There stuck the needle still. It was below the window sill, on a little table; it could not have rolled out; but it was not in the room. She shook out her dress, her shawl, her bed-clothes. She swept the floor. It was gone. That was the end of it.

Betty sat down and wept bitterly. All the country people of that day were superstitious. The ring had disappeared in a most mysterious way, for her door was bolted and her window high from the ground, and she firmly believed that the loss portended some great evil.

Meanwhile at the bar of the inn a little scene was going on. The Frenchman had asked for a glass of ale, and John, who was always tapster on Sunday mornings, had drawn it for him, when, as their hands almost met in the act, he saw upon the little finger of his customer a thick silver ring, the very counterpart of that which he had given to his Betty.

"You've a pretty ring, Monseer," he said, with a sort of catching of the breath. "May I ask where you got it?"

"Ah, but, certainly," said the Frenchman. "One does not boast, but a pretty girl gave me that. Yes, and a kiss also."

John turned as pale as his florid face could turn. He made no answer, but marched straight out of the tap-room and into Betty's kitchen.

She stood near the door in her holiday dress, with her white cotton gloves on. The magpies were chattering overhead, and afar the church bells were ringing.

"You are going to church with me, John?" she asked softly, and with a smile.

"That depends," said John Leaf.

Then he walked straight up to her and looked full into her honest eyes.

"You don't look like a cheat," he said; "but who knows a woman? Take off your gloves, Betty."

She obeyed.

"Where's your ring?" he asked.

Betty burst into tears.

"It's lost, John," she said. "I can find it nowhere."

"You haven't looked on Monseer's finger then," said John. "You poor fool, to give it to him and think I shouldn't know it!"

"Oh, I'll swear I never did," sobbed Betty. "I give *your* ring to any one else! Why, John—"

But he pushed her from him with his rough hand, and would hear no word from her; and the next day he left the inn and enlisted once more, and was sent away again to India. And Betty left the inn also, and took service with a farmer's wife hard by; and whatever the magpies chattered about, it was no more of the love making that they heard when John and Betty sat together beneath the old oak-tree.

Five years went by. At last John received a letter from England, telling him that his father was dead, and had left all his little possessions to his only son.

John Leaf's fighting days were over, in any case, and he was on the invalid list for life. He had fought as desperate men do; had been commended and promoted, and had some medals and ribbons to show and boast of as compensation for a wooden leg. So he went home again, and settled down as proprietor of the "Magpie's Nest," and was a sort of hero among his neighbors; but he was very lonely. Men do not quite forget in five years. He could still see Betty's buxom form flitting about the kitchen in imagination, and when the magpies chattered in their nests, he could fancy that he sat with her still under the oak branches. Then he grew wroth with the magpies, who seemed to mock him, and ordered his little serving boy to tear the nests down.

In vain the lad pleaded for the birds. In vain he declared that, even if the new nests went, the old one in the topmost branches should be left "for luck."

"If the old magpies that built that find it gone, they'll peck some one's eyes out in the night time," said the boy. "It's been known to be done often."

But John Leaf the soldier had cast away his country superstitions.

"I'll have those magpies chattering about my ears no more," he said. "Up, and leave not a nest of them all. Some of the noisy devils will take possession of that old rag, if it is left hanging."

So the boy obeyed. He planted a ladder against the tree, and then swung out upon the branches. There was a grievous noise; and doubtless to this day old magpies tell their children of that massacre of the innocents at the great oak-tree. But there were no birds to chatter and scream in that great rag of a nest which the lad's hand clutched at last. He came down with the relic in his hand, and stood before his master with a grin.

"Eh, master! may I have all I found in the old nest?" he asked.

"If it's not a magpie's egg," said John Leaf.

"It's better than that," said the lad. "It's a silver ring."

"Let me see it," cried John Leaf, and snatched it from his hand.

It was the ring with which he had plighted his troth to Betty under the old oak, and he knew now that the magpies had stolen it, and that the Frenchman wore only one that resembled it.

The first thing that John did was to call himself hard names: "A jealous fool!" "A suspicious brute!" Heaven knows what else. Then he melted, and all by himself in the bit of woods beyond the house, shed tears, and vowed to find Betty if she still lived on earth.

Where he went, of whom he inquired, matters not; but one day when the sun was setting in the west he opened a little cottage gate to which he had been directed, and saw, at her knitting, under a vine-covered porch, his Betty, not changed one single bit. And she? She looked at him, and did not know him, with his thin sallow face and his wooden leg.

"What may you be wanting, sir?" she asked.

And he said, "Betty!"

And she cried out, "Why, mercy, it's John Leaf!"

Then he sat down on a bench close by her side.

"You know I never had many words to spend on anything, Betty," he said. "I'll come to the point at once. I know now that you were true, and no cheat, and that you never gave my ring to Monseer. I found it—or my lad did, for I'm not very good at climbing now—in the old magpie nest in the oak top."

"So the magpie stole it, eh?" said Betty. "Well, they are strange birds. I've heard they've taken spoons before now."

"And so, Betty," said John, "if you'll overlook the past, and let by-gones be by-gones, I'll be a happy man."

"I owe you no grudge," said Betty. "And by-gones are by-gones, John Leaf."

"But you'll let things be as they were, Betty?" said John. "You'll be my sweetheart again?"

She laughed.

"Don't you know?" she said. "Why, look there."

He looked. Through the gate came a foreign looking man, with gold rings in his ears and a silver ring upon his finger, who led by the hand a toddling child."

"Why, it's Monseer," said John.

"You see," said Betty, "I went to him to ask him how he came by his ring, and he proved it was none of mine. It has a name and a date on it that mine never had. And he was kind to me, and you had been cruel. And so we have been married three years, eh, Louis? And this is our boy."

"I had better go home, I think," said John Leaf. "One is always punished for being a fool. But this is your ring. Will you have it, Betty?"

"Pray keep it for your sweetheart," said Betty. "You'll find one soon, no doubt."

But John Leaf never found one again, and the ring found in the magpie's nest was buried with him when he died.

ANECDOTE OF SHERIDAN.

We remember to have heard the following of the dramatic wit and author, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, while a member of Parliament; and it will bear repeating, even though it may ere this have been in print:

Very shortly after entering the House, Sheridan joined the ranks of the opposition to the administration of Lord North, and his keen wit and ready repartee gave him great influence. Among the ardent supporters of the ministry was a member named Gowan—a noisy, troublesome fellow, who, for want of brain for argument, would endeavor to interrupt and disconcert the opposition by loud and frequent cries of "Hear! hear!" One day Sheridan took occasion to allude to a well-known political trickster of the time, who really wished to play the rogue, but had only sense enough to play the fool.

"Where," he exclaimed, in continuation, and with sharp emphasis,—"where shall we find a more foolish knave, or a more knavish fool, than this?"

"*He-e-ar!—He-e-ar!*" was instantly bellowed from the accustomed bench.

With a smile and a bow Sheridan turned to Gowan, and having thanked him for his ready and frank response, resumed his seat amid the uproarious laughter of the whole house.

It may be needless to add that the noisy member was very careful after that how he interrupted Brinsley Sheridan. C.

SCIENCE.

Until quite recently botanists regarded it as an established fact that leaves do not absorb either vapor from the surrounding atmosphere or water with which they are wetted, as, for example, when rained upon. Professor Asa Gray, however, in commenting upon some recent French experiments on this subject, in the last number of *Silliman's Journal*, says, "M. Cailletet confirms this fully, so far as respects the foliage of plants established in the soil and supplied with moisture by the roots. But the revival of wilting leaves, when sprinkled or inclosed in a moist atmosphere, however ingeniously explained away, always seemed to bear testimony to absorption. And M. Cailletet's experiments go to show, incontestably, that foliage does absorb liquid water—but not watery vapor—when supply by the root fails or is arrested."

The numerous advantages of scientific knowledge, even where it concerns subjects seemingly the least practical, are daily becoming more widely esteemed. Professor J. S. Newberry, chief geologist of the State of Ohio, referring in his last report to the growing appreciation of the significance of fossils by the public, says, "There are, however, yet some intelligent men, even members of the legislature, who cherish the notion that there is nothing which has any value in this world but that thing which has a dollar in it, and that so plainly visible as to be seen by them. Such men, to quote the language of one of them, 'don't care a row of pins for your clams and salamanders, but want something practical.'"

Mr. E. Whymper, a distinguished Alpine climber, has just had two canoes built at Copenhagen for use in Greenland exploration. One of them has a keel, is driven by a screw propeller at an average speed of three knots, and a maximum speed of five and a quarter, weighs only eighty pounds, including her machinery, and affords good sleeping accommodations, though only fourteen feet long. "These boats," he says, "are destined for service on the north-west Greenland coast. The screw propeller will certainly 'astonish the natives,' if it does nothing more, and I hope to get it on to some of the large lakes, and up some of the fiords which have never been visited by any European."

The exhalations of noxious vapor in the ground about Mount Vesuvius have greatly increased in number since the eruption ceased, and although extending but little higher than a foot above the surface, their influence is very destructive to small animals, as many as fifty dead birds having been picked up near them by a peasant in one day. In connection with this subject, it is of interest to note that Prof. Palmieri, the distinguished superintendent of the Vesuvius observatory, predicted the recent eruption to Mr. George Forbes, F. R. S., of England, more than a year prior to its outbreak.

The construction of a canal to connect the waters of the Caspian with the Black Sea is proposed by the Russian government. The head waters of the Manutch, a tributary of the Don, so nearly approach the Kuma, a stream flowing into the Caspian, that the desired communication can be effected by a canal between these two rivers. Its length will not exceed five miles and three quarters, but an intervening mountain will make the engineering work extremely difficult, and render necessary the employment of thirty-two thousand laborers for six years.

We are glad to learn that Columbia College in this city has established a scientific fellowship, to be awarded annually by competition among the members of the graduating class. The recipient becomes entitled to an annual income of five hundred dollars for three years, during which period he must pursue his studies under direction of the President of the College. Mr. John Krom Rees is the name of the successful student this year.

A dolphin with twenty pieces of coal in his stomach, varying in size from a marble to a large walnut, cannot be a common "find;" yet Mr. George J. Hinde of Toronto writes to *Nature* that while he was on a voyage between Buenos Ayres and New York, in January last, the sailors caught such a dolphin about two hundred miles from Cape Frio, in Brazil.

The lucifer-match manufacture is well known to be one of the most unhealthful of employments. Drs. Eulenberg and Wohl, in a French chemical journal, strongly recommend pills consisting of animal charcoal and gum tragacanth as a remedy for the deleterious effect of phosphorus upon those engaged in it.

At his last Royal Institution lecture, Prof. Henry E. Roscoe exhibited some photographs in natural colors recently taken by M. Niepce St. Victor. They are called heliochromes—from the Greek *helios*, the sun, and *chroma*, color; but the colors are not permanent.

"A Traveller" writes to the London *Daily News* that the petrifaction of human flesh is not a new art in Italy, and that in the hospital at Florence there is a table apparently of *pietra dura*—hard stone—the different stones of which are, in fact, petrified slices of human flesh.

In connection with the speculations as to whether animal or vegetable germs in the air are productive of disease, Dr. Angus Smith offers the interesting suggestion, that possibly on the other hand they may bring life and vigor.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

E. Z. Z. says: "Having long been a reader of your invaluable journal, and knowing I can safely rely upon your good judgment, I come to you with a question which I hope you will pay at least a little attention to. I have a sister-in-law living with me at present who, during the past year, spent the most of her time in ——, where she became infatuated with a young man about two years her senior, and editor of the ——. No engagement, to my knowledge, was ever entered upon, but there seemed to be a mutual understanding that such a thing would be the result ere long. Since she came from the State of ——, she has received two letters, which seemed very affectionate, and she answered each of them. It has been some months since she answered the last one, and she has never received a reply. Now what I want to know is this: she is so infatuated with love for him that she repeatedly makes the attempt to write to him again, before receiving a reply to her last, and I have insisted, and so far succeeded, in keeping her from committing what I would term such folly. She conceives that such a proceeding would be perfectly proper, and as she is young, seventeen, I feel a responsibility upon myself in seeing that she is not misguided. As she will abide your judgment, I hope you will oblige us by giving it." If it is quite sure that the second letter was received, we think you are right, and the presumption is, if the second had not been received, he—if meaning anything serious—would have written again.

LEX (Wyandotte) says: "I have regularly taken the *Ledger* for the last five years, and come to you for the first time with a question which I hope you will be kind enough to answer in your correspondents' column. During a discussion with a friend the question arose whether the best public speakers on political topics, or otherwise, write out their speeches beforehand and commit them to memory, or if they merely trust to the impulse of the moment, and without elaborate preparation, are able to deliver an eloquent and convincing address. I claim that the former method is the one generally used, and that the latter, with rare exceptions, is out of the reach of possibility. As we are both students of law, and may expect to be called upon to speak in public at some future day, we would be very thankful if you could throw some light on the subject." Unless upon a rare occasion and by a happy hit there is no good speaking, from pulpit or platform, at the bar or from the bench, except as the result of preparation. What costs nothing is usually nothing worth. The methods of preparing vary. Some write and commit; some write "heads," or make a "skeleton," and clothe it as they proceed; and some think out and trust to memory for the line of argument, and to the moment for words. You and your friend may choose your *method*, but preparation is indispensable. No choice about that.

HARRY (Stouffville, Ont., Canada) says: "Having been a close reader of your valuable paper for several years, and particularly of Notices to Correspondents, from which I have received no little instruction, would you be kind enough to give me answers to the following questions: 1st. In wishing an intimate lady friend good-night at the door of her residence, is it proper for the gentleman to extend her his hand, or leave it with her to do so, or not, as she feels inclined? 2d. If on calling at a friend's house in the evening, and a lady acquaintance is there at the same time, would it be proper for the gentleman to offer his services as an escort, on her intimating that she was about to leave? 3d. Would it be well for me, a young man of twenty-one years, to engage myself to a young lady whom 'I love as my own soul,' if the engagement should have to extend over a period of three or four years, on account of not being in circumstances to marry?" 1st. Leave the lady to offer her hand. There are little ways of shutting up a lady to making the offer, we presume. 2d. Quite proper if there is no escort. Much will depend on the manner of doing it. 3d. We think you may engage, if the lady, knowing the facts, is willing.

A. A. R. (Scranton, Penn.) says: "I have been away from home to school for some time, and while at school I fell in love with a young lady from New Jersey, and I think for a while that love was reciprocated; but after I had been waiting on her for three or four months, she began to treat me rather coolly, and I wrote her a note asking the cause of it; and in writing to her, I told her that the intimacy which she had allowed to exist between us had been a source of great pleasure to me. In answer, she said our intimacy had been conducive to her happiness, but she could not allow it to exist longer, for reasons known only to herself. When I received this answer I let the matter drop, and tried to think of it as little as possible; but now I am home from school, and I find that my love for her has not decreased in the least. Now what would you advise me to do?" If you are old enough and independent enough to marry, ask the girl if she will let you conduce to her happiness permanently; but if, as we suspect, you are a school-boy nursing a bit of boyish romance, in your idleness, our advice to you is to get something honest and suitable to do, *and do it*.

DIMPLE AND DOT (Appleton, Wisconsin) says: "DIMPLE and I are in trouble, and as many have done before, we also have concluded to refer the subject to you. DIMPLE and I are firm friends, and a young gentleman comes quite often to see us. Now we both want to go with him, but do not wish to accompany him together. He seems to think as much of one as the other, and tells us each the same thing. Please tell us how we shall treat him. One time he is real pleasant to one, the next time to the other. Now, are we only flirting? But it's not so pleasant where three are concerned—but you 'know just how it is yourself.' Please give us your decision in the matter through the columns of your paper. By so doing, you will greatly oblige two constant readers of the *Ledger*." If DIMPLE and DOT have not such a combination of self-respect and common-sense as will enable them to dispose of this contemptible "male flirt," there is nothing in the experience of the Editor of the *Ledger* that would help them out of their difficulty, for he always claimed for himself common-sense, and only valued the society of persons who had self-respect.

AGNES M. says: "I have been a reader of your valuable paper for some time, and wish to ask your advice on a matter of importance to me. I am nineteen years of age, and when about sixteen I became engaged to a gentleman, with my parents' consent, whom I was very much attached to at the time. Soon after my parents moved out of the place, and we did not see each other for some time, nor hear from each other, although he promised to write, but didn't; and when we met, he was very cool in his behavior; but he now insists that 'I should marry him, which I am in duty bound to do, but I care nothing for him now, and the thought of marrying one that I do not love is very repulsive to me. I loved him once, but I do not now. Please do not think me fickle, but answer in the columns of your next paper." He cannot compel an unwilling girl to marry him, and it is not clear that you are "in duty bound" to marry one who neglected you so egregiously.

G. W. E. (New York) says: "Will you be kind enough to give me your advice on a matter of importance to myself? I am deeply in love with a young girl of about seventeen years of age, who I am very certain reciprocates my affection. I am about nineteen years of age, and am at present a clerk, at a small salary, but a chance for an increase is near at hand. Now my mother is opposed to my keeping company with any young lady, but I cannot reconcile myself to giving this girl up. Her parents are not opposed to my calling on her, and I am in a quandary as to which way I shall act. I do not want to give her up, for fear she may get some one else. How shall I proceed? Is my penmanship good enough for book-keeping?" At nineteen, with a small salary, and with the intense love of that young girl of seventeen fixed on you, we think you will be safe in taking your mother's advice. Your writing is fair. Your grammar would admit of a little amendment.

MARY H. (Bennington) says: "Having been a regular reader of your excellent paper ever since I could read at all, I now for the first time take the liberty of asking you a question. I am a girl of sixteen years, and have for two years past been corresponding with a young gentleman who is attending college, and is only two years my senior. Now I have no reason to think he cares for me, only I suppose he likes me to write him the news from home. I care nothing for him, and if you will only tell me how I shall break off the correspondence, of which I am heartily tired, without offending him, I shall be very grateful. I shall eagerly watch your Notices to Correspondents for a reply." Tell him plainly and kindly that you do not think it wise to continue the correspondence.

L. writes: "I am in trouble. Some time ago I became acquainted with a young man of irreproachable character and high standing in society, and he has been paying me attention, in fact, more than any other gentleman. But one unlucky evening I went with another young man to a party, and since that he has not been to see me, and has been going with another girl. I love him dearly, and I cannot bear this kind of treatment, and I believe that he loves me. Please tell me what to do to get him back again, for I believe I shall die if I lose him." If left to himself, he is very likely to come back; and if he does not, some one else will. Do not imagine that you will die in consequence, even if he does not. There is very little danger of that.

RELATIVE (Franklin, Tenn.) says: "Will you please answer the following question, and oblige many of your subscribers? A man and son married sisters, and both have children by these marriages; what kin are the children to each other, and what kin to the parents? This case is in our own community, and I hope you will not refuse to answer." The children are cousins; there is no one word that will describe the peculiar kind of cousinship. The son's children call the man "grandfather," and his wife "aunt;" and the man's children call the son "half-brother," and his wife "aunt."

M. H. (Rochester, N. Y.) says: "Will you please inform me, through your Notices to Correspondents, which is the longest river—the Mississippi or the Missouri?" The Missouri is 3,096 miles long to the junction with the Mississippi. The Mississippi, at that point, has a length of 2,986 miles.

MABEL (Reading) says: "Being a reader of your paper many years, I would like you to answer a question of mine, if you please. Whenever commencement is in college, why do they call it commencement when it is the last?" Because it is the commencement of vacation, probably, Mabel.

INQUIRER (New York) says: "Will you please inform me of the nature of Gladstone's Irish land bill?" We presume you refer to the bill that gives tenants compensation for unexhausted improvements on their farms by adjudication of the local judges, according to legal form.

LIBASI says: "Will you please inform me, through the columns of your paper, who wrote the lines, 'Though lost to sight, to memory dear?'" No poet is, so far as we know, credited with these words which are proverbial.

HIAWATHA had better decline pointedly the next and the next invitation, and severely let the gentleman alone until he comes to his knees, or shows he is not worth thinking of.

C. A. C. says: "For many years I have been a constant reader of your excellent paper, and knowing your kindness in answering correspondents, I take the liberty of addressing you upon a subject of great importance to me. I am deeply loved by two young men. Both have declared to me their intentions, but as yet I have answered neither of them. The circumstances are simply these: The young men have for some time past been paying me their undivided attention. One of them is very wealthy, and professes to feel for me unbounded affection, and says life would be an intolerable burden to him without my companionship; but I do not think my love is strong enough to warrant my giving him a favorable answer; still, while in his presence, I feel that I like him moderately well. The other young man is in very poor circumstances, but is talented, and will undoubtedly rise in the world. I love him very devotedly, and would be willing to follow him to death, but my parents incline, in fact, are very decidedly in favor of the first one named. Now I cannot marry the former one, and all my friends are determined that I shall. Will you please advise me what to do? I am very anxious, and should like an answer immediately." You should begin by acting honestly with the young men, and not leave each of them to think that he is your only lover, or that he alone stands a chance to win your hand. It would be wrong for you to marry the rich young man, while your love for the poor one continues. A woman who marries under such circumstances is pretty sure not only to be miserable herself, but also to make her husband and family unhappy. Postpone action till you can finally make up your mind.

S. E. K. says: "I have never troubled you before, and I should like to have you answer a few questions. My great-grandfather lived and died in England, leaving a great deal of property, and a son—my grandfather—that moved to this country, who, I think, was the sole heir, although I am not positive as to that. Just before my great-grandfather's death, he wrote to my grandfather to come and get the property. He went, and brought back from England a ship load of goods, and was preparing to go again, when he died suddenly. He had several boys, but at that time they were too young to look after the property. Now one of them is a lawyer; an oldish man. The most of them are dead, and they never attended to it. My mother is still living, from whom I gained this information. She remembers about the ship load of goods right well. She has sisters. Now what I wish to know is this: How are we to find out where the property is, and what is the most effectual way of going to work to get it? Do you think it would be worth while to try? Would one need to have much money to start on? Do you think that at this late time it is lying waiting for the rightful owner?" You should consult that uncle of yours who is an oldish man and a lawyer. He may have investigated the matter already, and be able to tell you just how it stands, and what the chances are, if there are any chances at all. As a rule, the time and money are usually thrown away which are devoted by Americans to looking up claims to old estates in Europe.

DOLLY says: "Being a constant reader of your very interesting paper, and knowing how willing you are to answer all questions, I have concluded to come to you for information. It is not the first time I have done so, and have always been well pleased with the answers. I should like to know if *voila tout* does not mean *that is all*. Considering it is the English for the above words, and a young lady should receive a letter from a gentleman friend, in which he spoke about something he considered her a very good hand at, and at the end of the sentence put the words *voila tout*, do not you think the lady has a perfect right to be provoked? thinking he meant that what he had just written was all he thought her good for. Furthermore, the whole letter was written in a sarcastic manner." It depends on the pervading tone of the letter, and that is a matter of which you can alone judge. The phrase *voila tout* means "that's all." It might be used in mere playfulness, or it might be intended as a sneer.

JOSEPHINE is miserable. She is secretly engaged to a young man whom her parents do not wish her to marry. She says: "My intended wishes me to run away and get married privately, thinking my parents will forgive us when we return. Now I love my parents and dislike to displease them, and I don't want to give the young gentleman up. Please give me your advice, and oblige one who is miserable." Obey your parents, if you do not wish to be miserable. It is your secret engagement, and the entanglements occasioned by your disobedience, which cause your misery. Frankly tell your parents just how you are situated. You can easily wait three years before marrying, as you are but eighteen, and the young man is but twenty-one. Should you listen to his scandalous proposals for an elopement and a secret marriage, you would probably be miserable for life. The idea of trusting your happiness in the keeping of such a dishonorable youth is absurd.

E. L. C. (Pittston) says: "Would you please answer the following questions in your answers to correspondents, as it will please a large number of your readers in this locality. Was there ever such a man as St. George? If so, where was he born, when was he born, and how long did he live? What was his character?" The origin of St. George is extremely obscure, and the very oldest accounts of him which are extant contain a strange admixture of history and legend. He was venerated both in the Eastern and Western churches, held in especial veneration as the patron of chivalry, and adopted as the tutelary saint of England. He is reported to have been martyred under Diocletian, and it is thought that the story of his conflict with the Dragon arose out of a symbolical or allegorical representation of his contest with that pagan persecutor.

W. (Waynesville, N. C.) says: "Being impressed with your candid and for the most part correct answers to correspondents, I presume to ask your opinion on a very delicate matter. Is it due courtesy to a second husband for the portrait of a first husband to be hung up in a conspicuous place, where it attracts the attention of all visitors? Please answer this question immediately in your columns devoted to correspondents." If the portrait always hung in its present position, you can see the awkwardness of removing it; if it were to be put up after the second marriage, good taste would hardly put it as you describe. But once the thing has been done, there is much wisdom in "letting things alone."

O. C. says: "Being a constant reader of your most valuable paper, I take the liberty to ask a question. It is this: When a husband dies, the general impression is that the wife gets one-third of his entire property. But I hold that she only gets the income, or the use of the one-third. There has been some dispute about this, and we have decided to leave it to you." The wife gets the income of one-third of the value of the real estate left by her husband, in case he makes no will giving her more. That is her legal right; but she can sell her interest outright, for what she can get for it, if she chooses to do so, instead of merely taking the income annually accruing from it.

MYTH (Carbondale, Pa.) says: "In reading the poets I find a great many gods and goddesses and other mythological beings spoken of. Now what I wish to know is this: Are there any works from which one could learn all, or anything about these beings? I would like to know something about them, so that I may better understand what I read." We are not in the habit of recommending particular books, and there are so many relating to mythology that an intelligent choice between them can be made only by some one, such as a good teacher, a college professor, or an intelligent minister, who is acquainted with the person desiring to study the subject.

SODA WATER says: "I went walking in the village with a lady, and only had five cents in my pocket. Through walking I got thirsty, and as we passed a soda fountain I told the girl to wait a minute for me, and went in and drank a glass of soda. When I came out the girl was gone. Somehow my friends found it out, and they pester me about it. Did I do wrong?" You acted very ungallantly. The girl served you right in leaving you, and your friends are justified in "pestering" you about the matter. As to your having done anything wrong, it is doubtful if you have yet arrived at the state of intelligence when one becomes morally responsible.

ESTELLE says: "I do not know who else to go to for information, so I come to you, as many others have done before me. What is the postage on a letter from New York to Lima, in Peru, South America? How long a time does it take a letter to go there, and what route does it take? Please answer in your next issue, if possible, as I am very anxious to know." The postage on a letter to Lima, Peru, not exceeding half an ounce in weight, is twenty-two cents. Letters are sent by the British Mail Steamship Company, via Colon. We are informed that it takes from forty to fifty days for a letter to go to Lima from New York.

E. C.—You ask, "Can a young man seventeen years of age take part of a store?" You probably want to know if a boy of seventeen can be a partner in a business firm, or part owner of a store. He can, if anybody will accept him as a partner, or sell him a part interest in a store. But he cannot enforce any of his contracts, nor can his partners hold him to his bargains; and his father, if he have one, could take possession of his interest and property whenever he should have a mind to do so. For these and other reasons boys find it difficult to carry on business for themselves.

INVENTOR (Chicago) says: "In 'Notices to Correspondents,' please tell me if there are any 'standing offers' of prizes, from nations, societies, etc., for the invention of 'perpetual motion;' or rather, what would be the advantages resulting to the inventor. Is such an invention generally believed to be impossible?" There are traditions of such offers. We have never seen the text of any of them. The last "perpetual motion" we saw was in your city; but in our case "seeing was" not "believing." The general impression is, that perpetual motion without perpetual force is unattainable.

K. W. F. says: "Will you be so kind as to answer a question for me in your Notices to Correspondents? I was born in Ireland. My parents emigrated to this country when I was about two years of age, and my father became a citizen as soon after arriving here as possible. I have served three years in the military service of the United States, and am now twenty-four years old. Am I an American citizen; or would it be necessary for me to get out naturalization papers to become a citizen?" You are a citizen now, and can exercise all the privileges of one.

S. V. asks: "Do you think it is right for a lady who is engaged to be married to me, to go to church and visit other places with another young man? Please answer soon, for on your answer hangs my destiny: whether I adhere to the engagement, or abandon her." It is not right for the young lady to do what you accuse her of, and her conduct is a pretty plain indication that she is tired of her engagement with you, and would be glad to have you abandon it.

CINCINNATI writes: "Which is the best grammar for self-study?" Cobbett's, if you can find a copy of it. In case you cannot get Cobbett's, then you can take your choice of all the rest. The best way would be for you to call at a bookstore, look over all the grammars you can find, and purchase the one which you can the most easily understand.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*